

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

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No. 1065.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 30, 1918.

Price SIX Cents

JACK REEF THE BOY CAPTAIN;

OR, ADVENTURES ON THE OCEAN.

*By CAPT THOS H. WILSON.
AND OTHER STORIES*



The men tried to spring aboard, but Jack and his brave boys pressed to the breach, and hurled them back to the boat, the boy captain crying in resolute tones: "The first man comes aboard dies!"

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ADVENTURES ON THE OCEAN

By CAPTAIN THOS. H. WILSON

CHAPTER I.

JACK REEF ACCEPTS A BARGAIN.

Jack Reef was the son of a retired sea captain, and knew as much about ships and their management as one could wish.

Though but just turned twenty-one, he was not only an able seaman, but an experienced navigator as well, and Captain Reef often said that he could teach Jack nothing and could even take points from him.

Jack had been on several voyages with his father, having started in life as a cabin boy, and had been so well brought up in the profession that he had passed successively through the stages of ordinary and able seaman, boatswain, second mate and chief officer, and now was quite competent to command a vessel of his own.

Jack lived in the seaport town of Lester, a place of considerable size and importance, from which every year many vessels set sail to all important points on the coast, and to which came ships from all quarters of the globe.

As we have said, Captain Reef had retired, and with a comfortable though not fabulous fortune with which to support himself in his old age, and now he was looking around for some steady occupation for Jack.

Jack would have to make his own way, as he had been obliged to do, but although the captain did not intend to let his son enjoy himself, there were many ways by which he could assist the young fellow without lowering his self-esteem.

How to put Jack on the right track, however, was what was just now exercising the worthy skipper's mind.

And then, as if to settle the difficulty, fate stepped in at that moment and decided the question offhand.

It is said that there was a woman at the bottom of every trouble, and so, in this case, a woman was concerned, and a very pretty one, by the way, who was the main cause of Jack's—well, who greatly influenced his future life, not to particularize too closely.

Marie Rollins was Jack's sweetheart, and in every way worthy of such a noble, manly, high-spirited fellow, loving him as devotedly as he loved her, and ready and willing to be his wife.

However, the course of true love never did run smooth, the poets say, and there were obstacles at the very start, and obstacles, too, which were not easily surmounted.

Judge Rollins had made his money in trade, and studied law, entered the bar, and been finally made judge, still running his store and making money with both hands, retiring at last from active business life with a fortune variously estimated at from one to five millions.

He was purse-proud and arrogant, dictatorial and severe, a regular beggar on horseback, willing to ride over all who came in his way, and caring for no one but himself.

That was the father of Jack's sweetheart, and here was the first obstacle, as he had often declared that he cared not how good, or how pure, or how noble a young fellow was, he amounted to nothing unless he had money, and that no one

should marry his daughter who could not count his wealth by six figures.

Jack had often visited Marie, but since becoming of age his visits had been frowned upon, and he had been almost told in so many words that he was not wanted around.

One evening Jack called, as he had been accustomed, and was getting on very nicely with Marie, when a man by the name of Blackford Towne entered the parlor in company with Judge Rollins.

Black Towne, as he was usually called, was considered fairly rich, and practiced law in the place, but was generally disliked, and many ugly rumors were afloat concerning him.

Many of the best citizens would have nothing to do with him, and as it was therefore somewhat surprising that Judge Rollins, who considered himself so vastly superior to every one else, should be on terms of intimacy with such a person.

"I thought I told you not to come into my house any more?" cried the judge angrily, as Jack entered.

"You did not, sir," answered Jack, rising, "and hitherto have treated me with consideration."

"I permitted your visits to my daughter to pass unnoticed when they had no special importance, but now you are older, and they must cease."

"I would like a word with you in private, Judge Rollins," said Jack, reddening.

"If you have anything to say, it can be said before this person," retorted the judge pompously, at the same time indicating Towne by a wave of the hand.

"I love your daughter," then declared Jack boldly, "and I wish to make her my wife."

Black Towne so far forgot himself as to laugh boisterously, but instead of rebuking him, the judge replied:

"Indeed! I do not wonder that Mr. Towne laughs. Have you any idea of supporting her, provided she becomes your wife?"

"Oh, he leaves that entirely with you!" laughed Towne, hilariously.

"I can work as well as any one else," asserted Jack sturdily. "I am an able seaman and a navigator, and will not take odds from anybody."

"Can you show a fortune of one hundred thousand dollars?" sneered Judge Rollins.

"Is that the price for which you mean to sell that noble girl?" demanded Jack pointedly.

"I asked you if you could produce such a sum. When you can I may talk to you."

"Will you give her to me when I have that much money all my own?" again demanded Jack, determined to force the millionaire into some sort of an admission.

"Do you think I would sell my child?" asked the judge angrily, trying the high and mighty dodge for once.

"Yes, you have said as much," returned Jack unflinchingly. "Is that your offer?"

"Say yes, Rollins," laughed Towne impudently. "It's a jolly joke!"

"Yes," answered the judge. "When you can produce one

hundred thousand dollars of your own money, my daughter is yours."

"Agreed!" cried Jack triumphantly. "Marie, you witness this?"

"Yes, Jack," cried the young girl, "and I know you do not shrink from the task."

Towne began to laugh again, but Jack silenced him by saying sternly:

"Judge Rollins, this is an agreement, and I shall hold you to it upon your honor as a gentleman. The compact has been witnessed, and I shall consider it a valid one."

The judge tried to look pompous, but only made himself ridiculous, and Jack, picking his hat up from the table, walked toward the door, and said:

"I wish you good evening. Remember your promise."

"Jack!" cried Marie, running up to the young sailor, and throwing her arms about his neck.

Jack held her in his arms for a moment, pressed a kiss upon her lips, and then said:

"Good-by, dearest. I go to seek my fortune. Remain true to me, and one day I will return and claim you for my bride."

"I will, Jack, indeed, I will, and I know that you will succeed."

Then Jack released her, and in a moment was gone.

"Go to your room!" thundered the judge. "Aren't you ashamed of yourself?"

"No; but I am ashamed of you for being so base," retorted Marie angrily, and with a queenly grace the indignant girl swept from the room, leaving the judge and his satellite alone.

"You've put a lien on my claim, Judge," tittered Black Towne. "Suppose the boy makes the money and claims the fulfillment of your promise! You'll have to prove that I had a prior attachment on the property."

"He never will get it, so you need not be alarmed."

"I am not," chuckled Towne, "for if he gets it or not, the girl shall be mine."

CHAPTER II.

THE ADVENTURES ON THE WHARF.

"Cap'n, how am I going to raise a hundred thousand dollars?"

"What do you want to do with all that money, Jack?"

"Win Marie Rollins. The judge won't let me have her until I am worth that much."

"I hardly supposed he would then, he's so lordly."

"He's given me his word, Cap'n."

"That's worth as much as your fortune at present, Jack. Was there witnesses?"

"Yes."

"Aye, then that's different. And so you're to have her for a hundred thousand?"

"Yes, Cap'n, of my own."

"And you want to know where you're to earn it?"

"That's it, Cap'n."

"Well, just wait a bit, and I'll tell 'ee."

Jack Reef always addressed his father as Cap'n, and the old fellow liked it, finding it both respectful and affectionate, and reminding him of the days gone by when he had trod the quarter-deck and commanded his own ship.

Jack had asked his advice, knowing that he needed no long explanations, and the old sea-dog had promised to give it to him.

However, after knocking the ashes out of his pipe, refilling it and smoking in silence until it was nearly exhausted the second time, Captain Reef looked up, and said:

"I can only go by dead reckoning, Jack, and it takes longer than I thought it would. Give me more time, and I'll let you know what I think about it."

"Aye, aye, Cap'n. Take as long as you like—a day, a week, if necessary. It's not an easy matter, I suppose, to settle how to make all that money right away."

"No, Jack, it's not, but you leave it to me, and I'll work it out."

It was yet early in the evening, and Jack, thinking his father would be quieter if left to himself, tossed on his cap and started out to visit one of his chums.

He had hardly left the house, however, when a voice called to him from the gate, which clicked at that moment:

"Ahoy, there, Jack! Going out?"

"Only to see you, Don. Glad I met you. Whither bound?"

"For a stroll, and I came to get you to go along."

Donald Hall, called Don for convenience, was Jack's most intimate friend and companion, and of his own age, the boys having been born upon precisely the same day, and this, among boys was sufficient to secure a lasting friendship.

"Where are you going, Don?"

"Along the wharves. The air is cooler there, and we won't meet a crowd."

The two young fellows strolled along, arm in arm, and Jack laid his plans before his friend, for there were no secrets between them.

They were walking along a deserted part of the wharf, devoted to foreign vessels, which was just now particularly quiet, there being no ships lying at the berths and no sailors loitering around, when suddenly their attention was attracted by a scream.

It seemed to come from the water and not far away, Jack's first thought being that some one had fallen overboard, either from one of the docks or from a boat in the harbor.

Running to the edge of the deck, Jack peered through the darkness, and cried out:

"Who is that?"

"Help!" cried a voice, evidently that of a boy.

"Come back here!" growled a man's voice, at the same time, and the sound of oars was heard.

"What's the matter out there?" cried Don.

A light skiff was now seen approaching through the gloom, and in it a boy, sculling rapidly toward the dock.

Close behind was a larger boat, occupied by a man, who seemed anxious to prevent the boy from escaping.

"Come back here, you young villain!" he hissed, "or it will be the worse for you!"

"Don't let him take me back again!" cried the boy, appealing to Jack, as he reached the edge of the wharf and clambered up. "He will kill me if he gets hold of me."

"Don't be afraid, my lad," said Jack quietly, as he assisted the boy to reach the level of the dock. "He shall not harm you."

"What do you want with the lad?" asked Don, as the man's boat now ran alongside.

"He's my apprentice, and I'm going to take him back. The young beggar is all the time running away."

"No, no! I don't belong to him at all!" cried the boy, clinging to Jack. "He took me away from home, and he beats me and knocks me down. I never promised to go with him at all, but he wants me because he don't have to pay me."

"It's a lie, you imp!" blustered the man, climbing up. "Let me have him, young man."

"You shall not touch him," said Jack stoutly, "or, at least, until your claim can be proved."

"I tell you he's been bound over to me, and I've a right to him."

"You have no right to beat him."

"I have if he don't mind what's told him. He's lazy and impudent, and has got to be taught his duty."

"Can you produce your papers?"

"No, he cannot," interposed the boy. "He took me away from where I was living, and he has no right to me. I'll die before I go back to that nasty vessel of his."

"We'll see about that!" growled the man, advancing.

"Stand off!" cautioned Jack.

"I tell you the boy is mine."

"And I tell you that you'll have to prove it before the commissioner."

"I'll prove it now."

With that the man attempted to wrest the boy from Jack's grasp.

"Here, Don, take the child, while I give this fellow a settler."

Jack quickly passed the boy to Don, and then, as the man began to make hostile demonstrations, closed with him at once.

It was all done very quickly, and it was too dark to see clearly what had happened, but in another instant there was the sound of a sharp spat, a muttered exclamation, and a splash in the water.

"There! Stay there till your anger cools off a bit," said Jack quietly, "and if you want anything more from me, ask for Jack Reef anywhere along the shore, and you can be accommodated."

"By Jove! that was a clever hit," said Don admiringly. "You knocked him clean off the dock."

"Come away," said the boy at this juncture. "He will get his men to help him, and you will be killed. They are terrible brutes."

"There is no hurry," said Jack coolly, as he took the boy's hand in his own and walked leisurely up the wharf.

"I don't hear anything," observed Don, presently. "I guess the brute don't want another dose of your medicine."

"What is your name, little fellow?" asked Jack pleasantly, as they walked along.

"Tony White, but I don't think it is that, after all."

"Then why do you say so?" asked Jack, with a smile.

"It is the only one I know, but I once heard Judas and the old woman saying something that made me think it might be something else."

"What is Judas?"

"The man you knocked overboard. That isn't his name, but everybody calls him that."

"It seems to be that all your acquaintances have shifting names," returned Jack, amused at the boy's quaint manner.

"Yes; some of 'em have half a dozen," he answered simply, "and they're a bad lot. You won't let them take me back, will you?"

"No, my lad. Who is this Judas of yours? He has a name that ought to hang him."

"The old woman says he will be hung some day. He's the owner of the schooner and goes coasting, but they say he does some smuggling, too."

"You don't live about here?"

"No; I came from New York; but I don't want to go back."

"Well, we'll see what can be done with you later on, and to-night I will take care of you."

"You are very kind, Mr. Jack, and I'll do anything for you."

"That's the talk, young un," laughed Don. "That's what Jack likes, and you may be sure he'll stick to you after that."

"I like you, too," answered the boy quietly, "for you helped me as well as Mr. Jack."

It was about ten o'clock when Jack entered the house with Don and the boy Tony, and as soon as he did so he heard his father calling to him from the sitting room.

"I've got it, Jack!" cried the skipper, as he entered.

"What is it, Cap'n?" asked Jack.

"Who's the lad, and where did ye find him?"

Jack related his evening's adventures briefly, Captain Reef seeming to be very much impressed by something.

"I'll tell you what it is, Jack," he suddenly cried. "I've got an idea."

"Well?"

"You can manage a vessel?"

"To be sure."

"Then I'll hire you to take one out for me and go shares on the profits. You'll be the first boy captain known."

"I'll do it," cried Jack.

"Hurrah for the Boy Captain!" cried Don.

CHAPTER III.

THE BOY CAPTAIN TAKES COMMAND.

Captain Reef, not content with his present fortune, had determined to try and make another.

He intended to charter a brig then lying in the harbor at Lester, put a general cargo aboard, and intrust her to Jack as commander.

The plan progressed rapidly, and Captain Jack Reef began to look about him for a crew.

"I am a boy captain," he declared to Don, "and I'll have a boy crew. Will you be first mate of the brig?"

"With all my heart!" cried Don, and there was no objection to this, as Don was nearly as good a navigator as Jack himself.

For second mate Jack picked out Dick Steere, a young fellow of his own age, a thorough seaman, and one of his favorite comrades.

"There's Syd Wright and Nate Huddard," said Dick; "they are good able seamen, and I know they are out of a berth at present."

"Secure 'em, then, Dick, and as many more of our set as you can. No men, mind, but all boys, young fellows of our own age, but good sailors."

Jack himself went around among his friends and acquaintances and soon succeeded in picking up three or four good sailors, boys he knew well and could be trusted.

Walt Jones, Phil Taggart, Joe Spencer and Sam Burton had all been old chums of his, and Walt had been on two voyages with him, so when he made known his plans he had no trouble in engaging the boys to go with him.

Don scoured up some of his old friends and set them to work as well, and in a few days the crew was nearly complete, having been increased by the addition of Ed Hayden, Will Darrell and Bob Underhill, the latter acting as cook, as it was quite important that some one should serve in that capacity, and as Bob had cooked before, he was hailed as a welcome addition.

Tony was to go as cabin-boy, for Jack had become very much attached to him, and meant to carry out his first plan of protecting him from his enemies.

The latter had made no move hostile to the lad, and Jack had not seen the man called Judas since the night he had hurled the fellow from the dock.

Before long the crew of the brig was complete, and it was one which attracted general attention, being composed entirely of young fellows of twenty-one or under.

If one had expected to find a lot of inexperienced boys on board, however, he would have made a great mistake, for they were all able or ordinary seamen, and there was not one who had not made at least one voyage, and some had made several, and long ones at that.

It was understood from the start that discipline was to be maintained; that Jack was absolute master on board, and was to be treated as such; that the mates were not to be Don and Dick, as formerly, but Mr. Hall and Mr. Steere, and were to be obeyed as promptly as though they had been bearded men.

The crew, when complete, consisted of a captain, two mates, eight foremast hands, a cook, a steward and a cabin-boy—fourteen persons in all; quite sufficient to man a vessel of the size of the Rover, as she was called, a brig of about five hundred tons.

Captain Reef put a general cargo aboard, and consigned it to a house in Savannah, Georgia, whence Jack was to bring a good price in the North.

Of course, all Lester heard of the undertaking of Jack Reef, the boy captain, and Judge Rollins could not but see that the young man was in earnest.

"You'll have to be careful, Towne," he said to his ally one night just a day or so before the time appointed for the sailing of the Rover, "or young Jack will cut you out, after all."

"Do you mean to say you would give him Marie?" hissed Towne.

"Yes, if he kept his part of the agreement. Why not?"

Black Towne said nothing, but he knew that Judge Rollins, bad as he was, would abide by the terms of such an agreement, if they were fulfilled.

"I must make him more afraid of me," muttered the man, who was a thorough rascal. "I shall have to let out what I know of his past. Besides, there's the girl's consent to be obtained, and it'll be no easy matter to poison her mind against her lover by a few cleverly circulated stories. She shall be mine in spite of all."

That same night, a few hours later, Towne entered a resort of sailors down by the water, and looking around him, beckoned to a man over in one corner.

The man came over, and Towne, retiring to a quiet spot, said:

"What will you take to get a young fellow out of the way for me?"

"Who is it?"

"The young man they call the boy captain."

"Jack Reef?"

"That's the one."

"I've got it in for him already. He sent me overboard t'other night, and he's got away with a boy of mine."

"Well, then, make a complaint and we'll have him detained; the cargo won't be delivered; it'll be a dead loss, and there's the beginning of his fortune gone."

"Make a complaint, eh?" laughed the other. "Before the commissioner, and have my affairs looked into? Not much, my friend."

"Well, you hate the young fellow, don't you, Judas?"

"Hate him? Yes, and if I could put him out of the way, I'd do it in a minute."

"What's to hinder your shipping with him, then, and doing it some dark night? I'll pay you well for the job."

"I'm a healthy looking boy, ain't I?" laughed Judas. "There's none over twenty-one going in that brig."

"Then what's the matter with sending Rabbett? He's little and smooth-faced—a regular boy for looks."

"Yes, but a man, out and out, for deviltry. He can be trusted, I suppose, but what if he should be caught at it?"

"That's his lookout. Of course they would chuck him overboard."

"Then I ain't sure that he can get aboard. The kid would know him."

"Can't he disguise himself?"

"Well, he might."

"See what you can do, and let me know. Have something?"

The villain and his accomplice drank, and soon afterward separated, Judas promising to see his employer the next day.

True to his word, he called on Towne at his office, or rather at the den which he called such, being a wretched, one-story affair in the worst part of the city, and informed him that his mission had failed.

"Can't any one go on board," he declared. "Crew all full; don't want any more. Have to be known to Jack Reef, anyhow. So that's off."

"See here, Judas," said Towne impressively, balancing a dirty paper knife on his finger, "this voyage of Jack Reef's wants to come to nothing. If we can wreck his vessel, kill him, destroy his cargo, or in any other way put it out of his way to make money this trip, it must be done."

"Well, we can follow him in the schooner and do our best. Why can't you come along?"

"So I can, for if I can see the young imp's defeat, it will be all the more pleasant."

"Then there ain't no time to lose, for the Rover has cleared, and will go out with the first ebb."

In fact, all the preparations for the voyage had been made, and as the time for sailing of the brig drew near crowds assembled on the wharves to witness her departure.

Captain Reef shook Jack's hand, and jumping into a boat, was rowed ashore, and immediately afterward the anchor was raised, the sails spread, and the Rover moved out into the bay.

A tremendous shout arose, and cheers were heard on every hand for the boy captain, who was now starting out upon his first voyage.

Judas stood on the deck of a small schooner lying not far from where the Rover had anchored, and as the brig stood out to sea gave his own orders to get away.

"If I'd had the putting aboard of the cargo," muttered Towne, who sat in the cabin while these preparations were going on, "there'd have been something there that would have blown him and his vessel sky high before he'd been three days out."

After a time Judas came down, set out a bottle and glasses, and said:

"We needn't fret till we get to Savannah, but then I'll fix him if I know myself."

"Couldn't you run the brat down and stave a hole in his bows?"

"Leave it all to me," said the skipper, with a wink. "I've got a grudge agin him as well as you, and I ain't the man to let a good chance slip, I'm tellin' yer."

"Then here's luck," and Towne raised his glass, quickly followed by Judas, the two villains drinking ill-luck to one who never harmed them, and yet whom they hated with a deadly hatred.

Ill would b. tide Jack Reef were he to fall into the clutches of two such monsters.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CABIN BOY WARNS THE YOUNG CAPTAIN.

The Rover plowed the waves gallantly, and the boy captain felt that now he had started upon the road to fortune.

For two or three days the weather remained pleasant, and all went well, but then the wind arose, the sea was lashed

into terrible billows, and the angry roar of the tempest drowned all other sounds.

Now was the time for Jack to show what stuff he was made of, and to prove himself a captain in more than name alone.

He called up all hands, issued his orders quickly, and in clear, ringing tones, remaining cool amid the awful danger, and communicating his pluck and courage to others.

The boys recognized in him a born leader, and they obeyed him instantly, feeling entire confidence in him, and ready to do his slightest bidding, knowing that he knew what he was about.

The brig flew before the gale, but there was no danger now, as she was well out to sea; the amount of sail she carried was sufficient to keep her steady, and everything was snug and fast.

Jack was on deck, having sent the port watch below to get a couple of hours' sleep, when one of the boys forward, it was Syd Wright, sang out:

"Light ahoy, bearing down on our beam!"

"Let her go off a point," sang out Jack.

"Aye, aye, sir!" responded Phil Taggart, who was at the wheel.

The light, however, drew nearer, and it presently seemed to Jack as though the strange vessel was trying to run down the brig.

"Ahoy, there!" he cried in piercing tones, "are you all asleep aboard there! Let her go off, Phil. Not too much. Ahoy, there!"

No sound was heard from the stranger, and some of the boys began to be alarmed, having heard the phantom ship, and almost feared that the dread vessel had sailed in these waters.

In another minute the vessel was bearing straight down upon them, as if about to strike them amidships.

"Tack ship!" yelled Jack. "All hands on deck."

It was not a minute before the boys came scrambling out of the forecabin, while from the cabin came hurrying the two mates.

Every boy of them flew to his post, and as the orders rang out, obeyed them upon the instant.

The Rover fell off, and not a moment too soon, for at the same time the strange vessel passed so close as to rub, and one might easily have escaped from the brig upon her deck.

"Ahoy, there!" shouted Jack to a man on deck, whose face he saw by the light of one of the brig's lanterns, "what schooner is that?"

"The Flying Dutchman!" answered a hollow voice.

At the next moment the Rover swept by, and the boys felt a cold chill sweep over them.

"I thought you were all dead," cried Jack, "by the clumsy way you steered. Keep a better lookout or some one will run you down."

"Captain Reef," cried a shrill voice at that moment, "I know that vessel. I saw her captain's face. That is Judas and his wicked crew."

Jack turned suddenly, and saw the cabin-boy standing at his side.

"You saw him, my boy?" he asked quickly.

"Yes, with the red light shining on his face. It is the man you saved me from that night."

"Aha! Then I shall remember him now. I did not see his face that first time."

"What did he mean by saying his schooner was the Flying Dutchman? She's called the Kite."

"It was some rubbish to frighten us with. Clap on sail, my lads!" added Jack, "and let us get away from this ill-omened bird. She means mischief."

No more was seen of the Kite, and the boys soon understood that she was no phantom, nor her skipper a ghostly creation, and their minds were easy once more.

At the time for calling the watch, however, the storm had renewed its fury, and Jack nearly stripped the brig of her canvas, fearing it would be blown away.

The boys were ordered to the pumps, but the hold was dry, and there was no danger from that quarter, all that was required being to keep before the wind and look out for passing vessels.

Jack remained on deck all night, not caring to sleep at such a time, and feeling it his duty to be at his post in a time of such great danger.

Toward morning the tempest increased to such a degree

that Jack deemed it best to lie to until daybreak at least, and the vessel's head was accordingly thrown up into the wind, the wheel put amidships and lashed, and only enough sail left to keep her steady.

The brig rode safely, and the boys who had a watch below slept quietly, having confidence in Jack, and knowing that there was now but little danger to be apprehended.

Morning dawned at length, and as the time for the sun's rising passed, the clouds being still thick and the glorious orb obscured, there seemed to be some prospect of clearing weather.

The vessel was put about, and some sail made, though not much, the brig proceeding on her way, when one of the boys shouted out from the bows:

"Something on the water, sir, on the weather beam. Looks like a bit of wreckage."

"Doubtless the remains of some unfortunate vessel caught in last night's storm," mused Jack. "There may be men upon it. Run and bring me my glass, Tony."

By the time the boy returned with the glass the sun had made himself partly visible through a rift in the clouds, and a few desultory rays were now shining across the heaving billows.

Jack mounted into the rigging, secured a hold, and gazed eagerly at the object upon the water seen by the lookout.

At times it would be hidden by the waves, and then it would appear, and presently Jack made it out to be part of a mast with cross-trees and top, upon which were two and perhaps three persons, though he could not be certain of the number.

The vessel's course was altered so as to bring her nearer to the wreck, and in the course of a few minutes the latter was seen more distinctly.

The sea was still running high, and it was by no means an easy task to lower a boat so as to take off the castaways, it being dangerous also to approach too near the floating spars, a blow from which might seriously injure the brig.

Jack ordered the crew of the long-boat to provide themselves with cork jackets, and at a favorable opportunity the boat was lowered and went to the rescue of the imperiled seamen.

There were three of these, and it was not without considerable difficulty that they were taken off and brought on board, both maneuvers being attended by considerable peril.

Two of the men were unconscious, although still alive, but the third, a young fellow of about Jack's age, informed the boy captain that they had been lost overboard from a ship the night before, the topmast having been struck by lightning and carried away while they were furling sail.

Others had been carried away, but they were the only ones that had been saved, and they had despaired of being rescued, not suspecting that there was any vessel within hailing distance.

The men were taken to the fore-castle and provided for the two who were in the worst condition presently reviving under the good treatment they received.

The brig was now put upon her course again, and Jack, leaving the deck in charge of Don, had gone to his cabin to obtain a much-needed rest, when Tony rapped upon the door and immediately after entered.

"Do you know who those men are, sir?" the boy asked excitedly.

"Sailors from the ship *Vulcan*, of Liverpool, they said."

"That is not so; they are from the *Kite*, the vessel that tried to run us down last night."

"Ah!" said Jack quietly. "You would not have me leave them to perish?"

"No," answered Tony, "but I would warn you against them. That youngest one is Rabbett, a regular imp of Satan. Beware of him."

"Thanks, my boy, but I do not think we have anything to fear from either him or his companions."

"But you will be cautious?"

"Yes; and now leave me, for I need rest."

The boy left the room, muttering to himself:

"He thinks there is no danger, but I know better. I would rather have a shark after me than those three men on board. I must keep a watch, and so repay him for all his kindness to me. I know that Rabbett means mischief, but I will prevent it and save Captain Jack if it costs me my life!"

CHAPTER V.

TONY OVERHEARS A PLOT.

Jack Reef lay asleep in his berth in his cozy cabin, never dreaming of danger, while Tony, the cabin-boy, moved about quietly, now here, now there, unnoticed, but seeing all that went on.

Passing the fore-castle, he heard some one say:

"You can do it easier, Rabbett, 'cause you're so small. You can get through a hole that the rest of us couldn't."

"But how about the bits?" asked Rabbett, his voice being easily recognized by Tony.

"Get 'em out of the tool-chest on deck. It's never locked."

"Well, that's all right," returned Rabbett, after a pause, "but if she goes down what's to become of us?"

"There are the boats, I guess," said a voice that had not before spoken. "It's the vessel that we care most about. The cap'n 'll take care of the young fellow later on."

"Well, how am I going to get at the place?" asked Rabbett, who seemed to be raising all possible objections to the undertaking on hand.

"Steal down the hatch when it's open, and stow yourself away. We'll see that you get up all right."

"How many holes will be enough?"

"Six, I reckon, if they're all below the water-line. A couple of hours will do the job. Plug 'em up till you get 'em all bored, and then pull out the plugs when you're ready to come on deck."

"And what am I to get for all this? It's a big risk to take. Tony knows me, and has been watchin' me. If I'm caught, they'll heave me overboard."

"You're a cowardly cur, Rabbett," said the man who had spoken last. "You haven't the spunk of a mouse."

"Maybe you'd like to do it yourself," growled Rabbett, in a surly tone.

"So I would if I could crawl in between boxes and barrels like you, and want nothin' better."

"You can have the job, Mr. Bones, and welcome."

"Bah! Stop your squabbling," said the other man. "Rabbett will do it, of course, and there's an end of it."

"Not if I know it," mused Tony, as he moved away, taking care to make no noise to alarm those within.

"The villains mean to scuttle the ship," he continued, as he entered the galley, "and after we have saved their lives, too. Was there ever such wickedness?"

After finishing what he had to do in the galley the boy went to Charlie, the steward, and said:

"Steward, have you such a thing as a padlock and staple? I want to fasten the captain's lockers."

"You'll find 'em in the tool-chest," answered Charlie. "Do you think you can do the job yourself? Show me the lockers, and I'll fix 'em. I've nothing to do at present."

"Why, what—"

"Don't ask me any questions," whispered Tony; "but do as I ask. The safety of the ship demands it."

"Did the captain tell—"

"Yes," said Tony desperately.

"All right—enough said," answered Charlie, and in the course of ten minutes the tool-chest was secured by a stout padlock, the key resting snugly in the steward's pocket.

"Don't hang it up," said Tony. "Keep it in your pocket, and if any tools are wanted don't keep the chest open longer than necessary, and then lock it."

"Captain's orders?"

"Yes."

After dinner Tony, sitting in the galley, saw the two men from the *Kite* walk toward the tool-chest, which stood alongside the cabin door, and direct swift glances toward it.

Then Bones walked away by himself, and presently sat down on the chest, toying with the lock as if in mere carelessness.

The boy saw a shade of disappointment steal over his face, however, and he thought to himself:

"I've taken the wind out of your sails this time, Mr. Bones. Trust me to outwit you in all your plots against Jack Reef or the Rover."

Jack himself came out of his cabin in the middle of the afternoon, but Tony concluded to say nothing to him of the plot, being sure that the plotters could do nothing.

The sky was still overcast and the wind strong, although there was no such gale as there had been the day and night before.

The coast they were on was a dangerous one, however, and there was every need of caution, particularly as night approached, and the boy captain repeated his warnings to the men to keep a sharp lookout.

As night advanced Tony did not relax his vigilance, still keeping a watch upon Bones and Rabbett, and yet taking care that they did not notice his espionage.

There was no danger, he reasoned, and yet he knew that the men needed watching, and so, without saying a word to any one, he continued to keep an eye upon them till after dark.

Being in the galley above, and having become fatigued from his long-continued duties, he fell asleep, and did not awaken till somewhere in the middle watch.

Arousing himself he started for the cabin, and as he passed the tool-chest unconsciously put out his hand to examine its fastenings.

In an instant he found that the staple had been wrenched out, and that the padlock was missing.

On another instant he raised the lid and ran his hand along the top, knowing almost exactly where everything was kept.

From the little rack in the lid he missed three or four augers, and the stock to which they were fitted was also gone from its place in the chest.

To be sure, he ran to the cabin, procured a light, and examined the chest and its contents more closely.

His suspicions were fully confirmed, and with an anxious heart he hurried forward, examining the main and fore hatches.

They were both covered with tarpaulins, and securely battened down.

"When were the hatches secured?" he asked Nate Huddard, the port watch being then on deck.

"At the beginning of this watch."

Tony said no more, but hurried to the forecastle, lantern in hand.

One glance about the place showed that Rabbett and Bones were missing, the third man from the Kite being in his bunk.

Hurrying outside, he went at once to the cabin, entered Captain Jack's stateroom, and shook the young commander by the shoulder.

Jack awoke in a moment, looked around confusedly for an instant, and then asked:

"Ah, is that you, Tony! What's up? Anything serious?"

"Everything! The ship's in danger!"

Jack was out on the floor in a moment, and hurriedly dressing while Tony continued, excitedly:

"The ship has been scuttled! Have the hold examined at once. Rabbett and Bones are below. Oh, why did I not speak of this before?"

"What do you mean?"

"That I discovered the plot this morning, and thought I had prevented it, but, after all, I am too late."

All hands were called to quarters, and a search of the hold was made. The holes were plugged and Rabbett and the two men from the Kite were found in the hold and made prisoners, but during the night succeeded in making their escape, and taking one of the Rover's boats with them. On the next day they came across a vessel which had been abandoned and took it in tow. It had a full load of lumber and was worth salvaging.

After towing their prize for several days they met a tug, and Jack made arrangements with the captain to tow the lumber vessel to Charleston, Jack taking charge of the tug.

CHTPTER VI.

ON THE ROAD TO FORTUNE.

The agreement was drawn up and signed by both parties, and then Jack assumed command of the tug, leaving Don in charge of the Rover, with orders to follow as rapidly as possible.

The tug was then made fast to the wreck, and Jack, assuming entire command by virtue of his agreement, steamed away for Charleston.

Reaching this port, he advertised for the owners of the timber ship, put in his claim for salvage, and telegraphed to his father for money to pay the captain of the tug.

This came the next day, and the man was paid, and pro-

ceeded to Norfolk, well satisfied with his bargain, and declaring the boy captain to be a gentleman and a clever fellow to boot.

The day after Jack's arrival Don came in with the Rover, and upon the next the owners of the timber ship were heard from.

She was the Victory, of New London, bound from Brunswick, Georgia, to New York, and had been abandoned by her captain and crew in the belief that she was sinking.

Her value, with her cargo, was put at two hundred thousand dollars, and as she was not materially injured, and, after being unloaded and pumped out, could be repaired at a cost of a few thousand dollars, the saving to her owners was considerable.

The admiralty courts awarded Jack the sum of forty thousand dollars for his services as captain of the Rover, three-quarters of which sum belonged to him, the remainder being divided among the crew.

He proceeded at once to Savannah, disposed of his cargo to advantage, and then took on a load of lumber and proceeded to New York.

"This will be a lucky trip for me, if all goes well," he mused, "and my chances of winning my darling are brighter than ever."

Nothing had been seen of the Kite, or Judas, or Towne since the attempt to set fire to the timber ship, and Jack considered himself well rid of all his enemies.

The run to New York was made in good time, and here the cargo was sold at good prices, Captain Reef realizing handsomely upon his venture, and Jack also making a good thing out of it.

There was some red tape to be unwound over the salvage case, the owners of the Victory disputing the valuation of the commissioners, and there was a talk of appealing the case, but upon learning that if it were appealed, the case would cost them nearly double what Jack had been awarded, the owners compromised.

Having disposed of their cargo, they could afford to do this, and Jack found himself at the end of his first voyage as a captain on his own responsibility the possessor of forty thousand dollars of his own.

"Nearly half of the required sum," he said to Marie, showing her his bank-books, "and if my good fortune continues I can soon claim you for my bride."

Old Rollins now treated Jack with much more consideration than formerly, bade the young captain consider his house as his home, and became, apparently, one of Jack's warmest admirers.

Our hero now determined to make another venture, and chartering the Rover in his own name, began to look around for a cargo, so as to increase his worldly goods.

He at last secured one, of a miscellaneous nature, to take to China, thus enlarging the field of his labors, and taking upon himself greater responsibilities than ever before.

He engaged the same crew as before, with the addition of four or five—all young fellows, however—so that it was still a boy crew under the command of a boy captain.

To add to his pleasure, Judge Rollins agreed to accompany him as a passenger, and to take Marie with him for a sea voyage—the young lady being accompanied by a friend, Daisy Duncan, between whom and Don Hall, the young mate, there was already a strong attachment.

A cabin was fitted up in elegant style for the young ladies, and they took possession of it on the night before the day of sailing, the Rover's departure being set for the first thing in the morning at the turn of the tide.

Judge Rollins was seated in the cabin set aside for his use, when a muffled figure entered, closed the door, threw aside its cloak, and said:

"So you think you are going to escape me, do you?"

The man was Blackford Towne, and Rollins turned pale at sight of him.

"You are going to shake me, are you, because this young cub has made some money, and seems to be in the way of making more?"

"A bargain is a bargain," faltered the other.

"So it is, but you forget that I hold evidence which will send you to prison for the rest of your life if I choose to disclose it."

Rollins made no answer, and Towne continued fiercely:

"I demand the hand of Marie for my silence or you go to prison. You thought I would not dare to show myself, but

you see your mistake. Give up this voyage, and while this young upstart is absent Marie and I will be married."

"No—no, it is too late. I can give no excuse for abandoning the trip at so late an hour."

"Then I go with you."

The elder man turned pale, and said, with a gasp:

"What—you go with us?"

"Yes; you must conceal me in this cabin."

"You will be discovered."

"That matters not when we are well out to sea. For three or four days I must remain concealed."

"But if I refuse?"

Black stepped toward the door, and said threateningly:

"Then I go at once for the officers, and in less than ten minutes you will be under arrest. Your answer!"

Judge Rollins buried his face in his hands and appeared overcome with his great emotion.

Then he said, with a great effort to appear calm:

"I am in your power, and must obey."

And the next morning when the Rover left her anchorage Black Towne was a passenger, all unknown to the boy captain.

CHAPTER VII.

AN UNWELCOME ADDITION TO THE ROVER'S CREW AND PASSENGER LIST.

At daybreak the next morning the Rover set sail, and Jack Reef was the happiest captain in all the world.

The voyage began auspiciously. Marie was with him, his prospects in life were never better, and therefore he had every reason to feel happy.

It was considerable of an undertaking to sail a vessel to China, but his preceding voyage had given the young captain considerable experience, and he knew he could rely upon his crew of boys to stand by him in every emergency.

As the Rover sped away on her voyage Jack stood on the quarter-deck with his sweetheart by his side, and as he watched the land fade from sight until nothing but the heaving waters could be seen, he said:

"As we are now entering the broad ocean, my darling, so shall you and I enter the ocean of life, not knowing what dangers, what trials may be ahead of us, but trusting, as I trust to reach the land beyond, that happiness will at last crown all our trials."

"And as trustfully as I now begin this voyage with you, Jack," the loving girl answered, "so confidently will I begin the voyage of life with you, knowing that no evil can befall me while you are at my side."

For two or three days all went well, but at last Bob, the cook, came to Jack, and said:

"Captain, the steward, complains that I draw too much, and that I waste grub, and refuses to give me enough for the men, and they are complaining."

"Don't you know how much is needed?" asked Jack, with a smile. "You were a cook before coming to the Rover on her last voyage."

"Yes, sir; but I don't think it's the steward's fault. He did give me enough and more. The trouble is, some one is stealing. I never starve my boys."

"There it is again, sir," said Bob. "If the men stole, they wouldn't complain of short grub; but they do, and swear that there isn't a thief in the lot."

"There must be, unless you wasted your food."

"There is a thief, but I think he is a stowaway."

"Then the boys must steal for him."

"No, sir; but I do think it's done in the cabin. I saw the tall passenger coming out of the galley last night. He said he had gone for a light to his pipe, but this morning I missed more grub."

"You don't mean the judge?" asked Jack, in surprise.

"No, sir, not him—the other."

"But there are no other passengers except the ladies."

"No?" said Bob, puzzled. "I always thought there were two gents in the cabin. There were the first night, certainly."

"Well, I will call the crew up presently and investigate the matter," said Jack, and then the cook touched his white cap respectfully and retired to his pots and pans.

Jack at once went to the stateroom occupied by the judge, and rapped on the door for admittance.

He heard a rustling within and the sound of voices, one in alarm, the other more quiet, and then the door was opened by the judge himself.

The latter seemed flurried, and had evidently been arranging his toilet, but what really astonished Jack was the sight of a figure seated on a stool, his feet resting on the edge of one of the berths, his head resting against the partition, and a cigar in his mouth, the smoke-wreaths curling gracefully upward.

"Good-morning, captain," said this person, with an impudent air. "Didn't expect to have the pleasure of my company, did you?"

"I must say that I did not," returned Jack, quietly, although his astonishment was unbounded.

The more so from the fact that the second occupant of the little cabin assigned to Judge Rollins was no less a person than Black Towne, the rascally rival for the hand of Marie Rollins.

"So it is you who have been stealing food from the galley?" said Jack. "Would it not have been better to have declared yourself at once?"

"It isn't for him——" began the judge, when Towne interrupted him with:

"Not a word, Judge, if you please."

"I will speak!" cried Rollins, in a temper. "Captain Reef, this man has friends, accomplices on board the Rover, stowaways, whom he feeds."

The villain puffed away in perfect nonchalance. Jack looked puzzled, and Rollins proceeded:

"I concealed him the night I came aboard, but I did not know that he had two of his tools concealed here. It is they for whom he has been stealing food."

"The judge is quite right," said Towne, "though I think he will regret having said so much."

"I understand you," said Rollins fiercely, "but you can do nothing, now that we are on the high seas. Captain Reef," he continued desperately, "this man holds the evidence of a crime committed by me in past years, and for some time has kept me in fear of the law, but now we are going to China, where the law cannot touch me, and I defy him."

"Blackford Towne," said Jack, "I care not how you have come aboard my vessel; the fact remains that you are here unlawfully. You are a stowaway, and I have the right to treat you as a criminal."

"I can pay my passage," said Towne impudently, showing a purse of gold.

"I cannot take it. I have all the passengers the law allows, not being regularly engaged in that line. Since you are here, you must work. You will please go forward and take your place among the men."

"Suppose I refuse?" asked Towne, in a quiet tone, and yet defiantly.

"Then I have the right to put you in irons. I am supreme here, as you will find."

"You shall pay for this outrage upon an American citizen," began Towne, beginning to lose his coolness.

"When an American citizen transgresses the law, he must suffer the same as any one else," retorted Jack. "You know the alternative. Which course do you prefer to take?"

"You dare not put me in irons; you have no right to refuse my offer to pay my passage."

Jack stepped to the door, called to Tony, and said:

"Send three of the men on watch to me at once."

In a moment Syd, Phil and Nate appeared, the appearance of Towne in the cabin causing them as much surprise as it had Jack.

"Take this man on deck and put him to work; if he refuses take him to the lazarette."

The three sturdy fellows were only too glad to obey, and in an instant Towne was carried away, despite his struggles.

"Now, sir," said Rollins, looking rather uneasy, "I am ready to tell you my story."

"I had rather not hear it," returned Jack. "I understand your position, and am glad to see that you were courageous enough to defy this scoundrel."

Just then Washburne came hurrying in, saluted Jack, and said quickly:

"We've caught two stowaways, sir, and they are old acquaintances of ours, and we are now in their old quarters in the lazarette."

Bones and Turk?"

"No, sir; but Bones and Rabbett, of the schooner Kite."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LOSS OF THE ROVER.

"Your young captain is just about right, Mr. Mate, and if I had not given you my word, and if Marie was out of the question, I believe I'd fall in love with him."

"I am glad you have decided not to do so, my pretty Daisy, for I wouldn't want to call Captain Jack out. I like him too well for that."

"The way he has served that wretch Towne and those two stowaways is too good for anything. I'm glad to see him have so much courage—spunk, as you call it."

"And so you called it, also, my dear," was the laughing rejoinder, "until I reminded you that it wasn't a proper word for a demure young lady to use."

The above conversation was held on the deck of the Rover, amidship, between Miss Daisy Duncan, passenger, and Mr. Don Hall, first mate, during the latter's watch below.

The two or, more particularly, the young lady, had been discussing Jack's prompt solution of a rather knotty problem—the disposition to be made of his unwelcome passengers.

Towne had refused to work, and had been promptly put in the ship's prison, and for further insolence had been placed in irons until he should become more tractable.

Rabbett and Bones would have liked to share his idleness, but Jack had other views, and the two were set to work doing all the dirty jobs necessary on board the Rover, much to their disgust, and to the gratification of the boys, who were thus relieved of many unpleasant tasks.

"I've got to feed you fellows," said Jack, "and I propose to make you work for your keep. I'm not going to have you getting fat at my expense."

In this instance, as in others, Jack had shown firm determination, and a spirit that would not bend to opposition, and by his prompt, resolute action had prevented no end of trouble at the very start.

The officers respected him all the more for it, the crew had renewed confidence in his ability, and Towne saw clearly that he was not to be trifled with.

On the third day of his confinement, when allowed to come on deck for exercise, for Jack was humane if he was stern, the man sent word to the boy captain, through Washburne, that he was willing to take his place in the crew and work like the rest.

The villain had concluded to try other tactics in order to carry on his plots, and thought that by being with his accomplices, and among the crew, he might gradually incite the latter to mutiny, or perhaps be able to kill Jack by watching his chances.

Jack, however, took no notice of the request, and it was not until it had been repeated on two successive days that he at last sent Don to the prisoner with the following message:

"Captain Reef desires me to say that he does not require your services, having no need of green hands. You will remain in your present quarters, your irons will be removed, you will be allowed the same rations as are served in the cabin, and will be permitted on deck, under guard, three times a day, half an hour each time, for the present."

"Then he intends to keep me a prisoner, does he?" muttered Towne. "Tell him that I intend to report him to the American Minister when we reach China. We will see if such an outrage is to go unpunished."

Don then went away, and Towne saw that Jack Reef was not to be bullied or threatened, and he cudgeled his brain to invent some other plan by which to injure the young commander.

It was at this time that the conversation above given was held, and a few hours succeeding that between Don and the baffled villain.

For some days the weather had been pleasant, and the wind favorable, but there was now something in the air which presaged storm, and disaster, though one could hardly define what it was.

While the mate and his sweetheart were conversing, Dick Steere being in command of the deck, Jack Reef suddenly appeared from the cabin, and said quickly:

"Order in all sails, Mr. Steere. The glass is falling rapidly, and I fear a cyclone is approaching. Even now it may be too late."

Up scrambled the boys, out rushed the watch below, and in an instant all was excitement.

"We are likely to have lively times," said Don, escorting Daisy to the cabin, "and you had best go below."

Just then a puff of wind was felt, and in a second the sky began to be rapidly overcast.

Marie appeared at the cabin door with her father, and cast an anxious glance at Jack, but Don hurried them all below, saying, in decided tones:

"We are in danger; this is no place for you. Go below, as you value your safety."

"In with everything!" roared Jack, taking command. "Luff a bit," to Syd, who was at the wheel. "Lively now, all hands!"

And all hands were lively, but before the sails could be entirely taken in the tornado struck the vessel and nearly threw her on her beam ends.

She righted quickly, but the sails were blown away, and over the seething waves she flew under bare poles, the masts quivering like reeds.

The sky was black as ink, and awful gulfs revealed themselves as the mountainous billows arose around the devoted vessel, now seemingly entirely at the mercy of the elements.

On and on they dashed before the gale, utterly powerless to guide their course, while blacker grew the skies and fiercer the winds, the waves all white with foam, the lightning flashing in blinding sheets of flame and the masts and the spars all aglow with electric fires.

"God help us," moaned Jack, "for no other power can."

On and on, hour after hour, they rushed, until at last that ominous sound, the roar of breakers, was heard straight ahead.

In another instant almost the vessel struck, pounded upon the jagged rocks of an unseen shore, and was driven forward with frightful velocity, and then plunged headlong into the boiling waves, which rushed over her from bowsprit to taffrail.

CHAPTER IX.

JACK'S WISE RESOLUTION.

The sun shone brightly upon a scene of dazzling beauty, the sky was as clear as crystal, the sea danced merrily in the golden light, birds of gay plumage flew from bough to bough, fountains sparkled and splashed among the groves of the richest green, the sands were like gold dust, and all the air was as balmy and all the scene as lovely as in the old days in the Garden of Eden.

The place was an island in the ocean, and the time the day after the wreck of the Rover, which now lay scattered all along the rocky shores of the island, out of sight of the charming scene now presented to the reader.

When the Rover had been dashed upon the shores of the island, overwhelmed by the billows, many of the sailor boys had plunged into the waves, believing that all was over.

Jack and Don sprang toward the cabin, were nearly swept away by the waves, but at last succeeded in reaching their sweethearts uninjured.

Then the ship struck, heeled over upon one side, and stuck fast, the waves beating pitilessly upon her quarter and threatening to annihilate her.

The brave boys seized their darlings in their arms, leaped into the boiling waves and swam ashore, though more than once it seemed as if they would be swept back into the sea by the returning flood.

Dick Steere released Towne by Jack's command, and at that moment the brig was lifted up by a mountain of water and dashed further up the bank, striking heavily on her side and beginning to split in twain.

The sky was too dark to present any good view of the shore, although it was still day, but the fierce lightning would occasionally reveal a stretch of land, a grove beyond and a line of cliffs to the left.

No one could tell who had been saved or who lost, and as the survivors hurried up the beach they looked in vain for many of their comrades.

Then the rain burst over the island, and Jack, Don and one or two others hurried to the shelter of the grove, where they found a slight protection from the fury of the blast.

Night came and the tempest subsided, the moon came out, and revealed a scene of most ravishing beauty, and the poor castaways, thankful for their deliverance, sought a much-needed rest in the cool recesses of the grove.

In the morning Jack crossed the island, and here beheld the lovely sight described above, though at that time he thought more of finding his comrades than of gazing at the beauties of tropical scenery.

One by one the crew appeared, until at last the roll was complete, none being absent except Towne and the two men from the Kite.

Then Jack started alongshore on an exploring expedition, finding abundance of fruit, a number of sparkling springs, several good sites for building houses, and quite a variety of living creatures, such as goats, pigs, fowl and smaller animals.

Upon the beach, near a ledge of rock, high above the reach of the waves, lay the Rover, broken in two, her masts gone by the board and her cargo scattered along the shore.

There was enough material from which to construct a smaller vessel, however, and this task Jack soon determined to begin upon at once, as it was not likely that vessels touched at or passed the island, and the young captain believed in men helping themselves and not waiting for outside assistance.

First, however, the task of getting together the valuable part of the cargo—that is, the provisions and water—was attended to, and then the collection of tools, loose timbers, spars, sails and cordage, this work occupying the whole of one day.

On the second day Jack came upon Towne, who, in company with Rabbett and Bones, was engaged in erecting a hut on the beach at some distance from the scene of the wreck.

"You won't make your fortune as soon as your expected," sneered Towne. "The loss of your vessel is a serious one, and one that will make men lose confidence in you."

"No man could have prevented that," retorted Jack. "And as it is, I do not despair yet. I have youth, health and strength, and abundance of resources, and many friends, and with these I do not fear to fail."

Then Jack turned away, Towne calling after him:

"But you have not yet won Marie Rollins, and if I can prevent it, you never shall."

Jack cared little for these threats, but went to work energetically, maintaining the same discipline on the island that he had on board the Rover, and speedily bringing order out of chaos.

No lives had been lost, and the regular watches were now resumed, the work being laid out by Jack, and prosecuted by him and by his two mates during his absence, so that everything was reduced to a system.

Houses for the shelter of the castaways, sheds for the reception of the cargo, and workshops for the men were built, all valuable material was collected and stowed away in good order, hunting parties were organized to supply the larder and procure skins from which clothes might be made, and at the end of a week the little colony appeared to be in a flourishing condition, and with the most cheerful prospects for the future that could be wished.

Then the work of building a new vessel out of the remains of the old one was begun, the ceremony of laying the keel being attended with great rejoicing.

In the midst of all this bustle, however, a great discovery was made by Tony, who, during his rambles along the coast, came upon a cave where the remains of human bones were found, and an inscription chiseled in the rocky walls which declared that a wonderful treasure was buried somewhere on the island, being the plunder of a band of once famous pirates.

"If we find this," cried Don excitedly, "your fortune is made, Jack, and we will all be rich enough to own ships of our own."

"Perhaps so," said Jack, "but we have not found it, and instead of wasting our time looking for it we had better go to work, for without a vessel to carry us away of what avail would be the pirates' millions?"

CHAPTER X.

THE GOLD HUNTERS.

Jack Reef was wiser than his comrades, and all search for the pirate's gold was abandoned, at least for the present, the work on the vessel continuing without abatement.

If anyone chose to look for the treasure when not on duty,

of course there was no objection, as every man's time was his own when not on watch, and acting on this theory, Don determined to find the treasure, if it were possible.

Taking Nate, Will Darrell and Joe with him, and providing themselves with arms and ammunition, picks and coil of rope, Don set out early one morning for the cave which Tony had found, resolved to discover more concerning the treasure.

Arrived at the cave, they examined the inscription, the lower part of which appeared to have been obliterated.

"It is only covered up with moss," declared Don, after a careful examination, and then, producing a knife, he proceeded to clear away the fungus growth upon the rock gradually, exposing a number of letters and other characters to sight.

This encouraged him to proceed, and he kept on until the whole face of the wall where the inscription was had been cleared.

Building a fire, and making a torch, the gold seekers then proceeded to read the inscription, which was very nearly as follows, modern expressions and characters being used in the place of the old-fashioned ones in the inscription:

"Here lie the remains of Israel Dunscombe, Rafael Ignara, Stefano Carlotti and others, last survivors of the once famous band of buccaneers led by Genaro del Blanco, known as Redbeard, the pirate.

"On this island, once the retreat of the band, lies buried all the treasures acquired by years of crime and bloodshed, buried beneath the ground at a point" (Here the inscription was obliterated).

"This treasure consists of thousands of Spanish doubloons, English guineas and other gold pieces, together with bars of gold, silver ingots and precious stones.

"Our leader being dead, our band scattered, our vessel destroyed, and all hope of escape from this place gone, we, the survivors, make this record in the hope that some one may discover this treasure and make good use of it.

"It lies midway between two palmettos on the south shore in the valley of death, and in the center of a triangle formed by three white stones, formerly hearth-stones of our huts.

"By following these directions and digging six feet below ground the treasure will be found. To all honest men we wish success; to such as ourselves may the gold be accursed.

"Israel Dunscombe,

"St. Carlotti."

"Raf'l Ignara,

"That's as clear as mud," declared Nate, when Don had read the inscription. "Who knows where the valley of death is?"

"On the south shore, of course," retorted Will. "We can find the trees at all events."

"And the white stones," added Don.

"Nothing could be clearer."

"I don't see it," put in Joe. "The stones will be covered with moss, or grass, or rubbish. If Israel Dunscombe wished to make us a present of his wealth, why wasn't he more explicit?"

The treasure hunters now set off for the south shore of the island, Don and Will believing it could be found, while Nate and Joe declared otherwise.

The hunt went on until the signal bell for dinner sounded, and then the party returned, Don telling Jack what he had learned and of his non-success.

In the afternoon Dick and a party started out to take up the search, but were no more fortunate than the others had been, although they had found two palms and one flat white stone near the remains of a hut, but no amount of digging had resulted in unearthing the treasure.

At intervals during the next fortnight the search went on, Jack taking no part in it, however, but steadily keeping at work on the vessel which gradually assumed shape.

"There is more treasure in our vessel for us than on the island," he declared, "and I do not mean to abandon this work to go chasing phantoms."

At this time Bones and Rabbett offered their services to Jack to help on the work, declaring that they were tired of doing nothing and being ruled over by Towne, who treated them like dogs.

The boy captain accepted them, but warned them that any act of treachery on their part would meet with speedy punishment.

"What makes you 'spect us so much?" asked Bones.

"Because you have a bad name, which will one day hang you," retorted Jack. "I have not forgotten your attempt to wreck the Rover, and if you try any more nonsense with me I'll have you up on that very charge at the very first port we make."

For some time things went on well, and the two scoundrels worked hard, but at last Tony discovered them slighting the work and holding frequent whispered conversations together.

They were engaged in caulking, a most important part of the work, and Tony saw that if what they did was allowed to stand, the vessel would leak like a sieve.

He at once went to them and said, bluntly:

"Get away from here. You are making a botch of this thing purposely. I'll report you to the captain."

Rabbett seized the hammer and aimed a blow at the boy, but Tony sprang forward, dealt him a crack under the chin and knocked him off the staging in a twinkling.

Bones sprang at the boy to retaliate in kind, but Tony leaped nimbly aside, and at the next moment Dick and the young captain appeared.

Jack saw that there was trouble of some kind going on, and he at once demanded to know what it was, and Tony told him.

Bones at once bolted, and Jack thanked Tony for his watchfulness, by which much danger had undoubtedly been averted.

Tony turned away and Jack and the second mate went elsewhere, Dick saying:

"That boy loves you, captain, and if he were a woman he could not be more devoted."

"Yes," answered Jack quietly, but with an expression that Dick could not but observe.

"What were you going to say?" he asked.

"Nothing," was the quiet answer.

"Maybe so," thought Dick, "but there are other mysteries here as great as that of the secret of the hiding place of the pirate's gold."

CHAPTER XI.

TONY MAKES ANOTHER DISCOVERY.

"In another week the vessel will be finished, and then ahoy for home!"

Thus spoke Jack Reef after the new vessel made from the wreck of the Rover had been launched and was well under way toward completion.

All hands had worked faithfully, and the result was seen in the rapid progress made, Jack being more than satisfied with his young allies.

Though Rabbett and the other man from the Kite had at first offered to work for Jack until their treachery had been discovered by Tony, Towne had never made any advances, but spent his time in prowling about the island, now and then remaining for hours upon a prominent headland, overlooking the ocean as though trying to sight some passing vessel.

"Let him go, if he likes," said Jack. "He won't be missed. I don't want him aboard any craft that I command."

"Why can't you leave him behind?" asked Don.

"So I could, but that would be cruel. The man has doubtless sought to injure me, but I cannot abandon him in so heartless a fashion."

Judge Rollins, though unused to manual labor, gave Jack a great deal of assistance, nevertheless, and the young commander was likewise cheered and encouraged by the presence of Marie, who seemed to stimulate him to do his best always.

Don and Daisy also made rapid progress in love making, though that did not prevent the jolly young mate from working heartily nor from hunting for the pirates' gold, which he insisted was on the island.

Jack, however, concluded not to worry over this, but to attend first to getting his new vessel in proper shape, that being more important in his eyes than searching for a supposed treasure which, after all, might not exist.

When the work had advanced to a certain stage, therefore, he announced that in another week they could leave the island.

The two girls and Mr. Rollins had already taken up their quarters on the vessel, which was named after Marie, state-

rooms having been fitted up for them, though Jack and the rest still lived on shore.

The day after Jack's announcement he and Marie, with Tony for company, started off for a walk on the island, Don being left to superintend the work on the vessel.

They had entered a little valley, when Tony, who had given chase to a young goat, suddenly called to his companions.

Jack came up and found the boy standing on a broad, flat stone, from which he was busily scraping the moss.

"Here's one of them," he cried, and then he dashed off at a right angle, and presently paused, and cried aloud.

"What's the matter, Tony?" asked Jack, greatly puzzled.

"And here's another!" cried the boy.

"Another what?"

"White stone. There are three of 'em."

"What do you mean?"

"If you can find the third we can tell where the gold lies buried."

"Oh, are you thinking of that still? I don't believe the treasure is here at all."

Tony, however, walked back to the first stone, measuring the distance carefully, and then struck off at an angle until he had measured the same distance.

Here he paused, stuck a stake in the ground, and returned to the second stone, from which he measured an equal distance as before toward the stake, pausing within ten feet of it.

"The angle isn't sharp enough," he muttered, and then began measuring off a space once more.

This time he came nearer the stake, and, hunting around in the grass, suddenly stopped and shouted:

"Here's the third one!"

Jack and Marie came up and found him standing on a flat stone, from which he was clearing the rubbish.

The stone was white like the other two, and Tony now exclaimed:

"Here we are, and you'll find that they are all the same distance apart. And see! there are the trees that the pirate speaks of."

"I believe he has found the spot, after all," said Jack. "Let's measure and get the center."

Then from a point midway on the three lines between the first and second, second and third, and third and first stones Jack ran straight lines at right angles, the intersection of these being the center of the triangle.

"That's the spot," he cried, driving in a stake.

"Shall I go and get shovels?" asked Tony, excitedly.

"Yes," said Jack, quietly, "and bring Mr. Steere and two of the crew."

"Do you really think we have found the place where the gold is buried?" asked Marie, after Tony had departed on his errand.

"It looks like it."

"And will you take it on board?"

"Certainly, for then I shall have earned the right to call you mine."

"You have already done so," answered Marie, naively.

"Yes, but you remember the conditions?"

"I do not think father will hold you to them after all you have done for us both."

"At any rate there can then be no obstacle to our union."

Jack busied himself cutting away the brush and rubbish where he had planted the stake, so that by the time Tony returned with Dick, Will, and Joe, all bearing spades and crowbars, there was an open space three or four feet in diameter.

"So you've found it, have you, sir?" asked Dick.

"Yes; but if the gold proves to be here, the work of getting the vessel ready must not be interfered with."

Then Tony, as the discoverer of the place, struck the first shovel into the ground and threw the dirt out upon the ground.

Then all hands except Jack got to work, digging rapidly, and soon being up to their knees in a square trench wide enough to accommodate them all.

At the end of two hours they had dug down six feet, when Tony's shovel suddenly struck something which gave out a metallic ring.

Hastily clearing away the earth, the top of an iron chest was exposed to view, and in this, beyond a doubt, was concealed the pirates' gold!

CHAPTER XII.

THE TREASURE RECOVERED.

"Break in the top of the chest!" cried Jack, in great excitement.

Dick seized a crowbar and struck the iron a sharp blow. A deep dent was made, but as yet the contents of the chest were not revealed.

"Another!" cried Jack.

Then Dick summoned all his strength and brought the point of the bar down on the chest with tremendous force.

This time it was buried to the depth of several inches.

Moreover, it was wedged in so tightly as to require the united strength of the three young men to release it.

Through the hole thus made Jack could see the glint of gold.

"Again!" he cried, seizing another bar and striking the iron a tremendous blow.

Dick brought down his bar at the same time, and the top of the chest was split in twain.

"Clear away the earth," cried Jack, "and we'll pry off the top."

Tony seized a shovel and began digging around the side of the chest, so as to give Jack a chance to work his lever.

Will quickly assisted the boy, who soon showed fatigue and was obliged to desist.

Tony sprang out of the pit and stood looking down on those below, and presently Jack inserted the end of the bar under the broken iron and began to pry it off.

Dick threw his strength on the bar, and in a few moments the iron yielded and split all across.

It was little trouble after that to tear off the whole top of the chest, and then the contents came to light.

A bit of canvas was laid over all, but when this was torn away a number of duck bags came in sight, together with several bars of solid silver.

One of the bags had been pierced by Dick's crowbar, and it was seen to be filled with broad gold pieces, evidently Spanish doubloons.

Jack and Dick seized these bags one by one and passed them up to those above to place on the ground.

Marie helped at this work as well as the others, and kept tally of the bags and bars as they were sent up.

There were twenty-one bags, and then came a number of gold and silver bars, gold candle-sticks, vases, figures and ornaments, silver and gold bowls, filled with pearls, rubies, emeralds and other jewels, set and unset, and then bags of gold dust, and a few more containing gold pieces.

"We haven't begun to reach the bottom yet," cried Jack.

As he spoke Dick dove his hands down among a lot of loose jewels and uttered an exclamation of horror.

"What's the matter?" cried Jack, stepping back.

"Look at that?"

Dick held in his hands a human skull, bound around with gold, with great jewels set in the eye holes and where the teeth should be.

The top had been sawed off and the inside fitted with a gold cup, at the bottom of which was a deep red stain.

"Ugh! look at that," cried Dick. "That piratical villain has used this for a drinking cup," and he threw the hideous but costly utensil on the ground with an expression of deep disgust.

"Here's another," cried Jack in a moment, tossing out a cup made similarly to the one Dick had discovered.

Just then the sound of a gun was heard and Jack cried:

"Time's up and we must return."

"We can't leave these things exposed," cried Dick. "Those villains from the Kite would carry away every dollar's worth."

"Run and bring Mr. Hall and all the men but two or three," said Jack to Tony, quickly, "and tell them to bring some heavy sacks."

Off ran Tony on his errand, the others continuing their work, so that by the time Don and his men arrived the chest had been emptied.

It was then hauled up out of the hole and thrown aside, when Jack made the important discovery that under it was another of the same size.

This, upon being broken open after repeated efforts, was found to contain treasure less in value than that in the first chest, but, for all that, was no mean prize.

While the contents of the first chest were being packed in the sacks, the second was emptied and was then hauled out. There was no sign of a third chest, but Jack ordered the men to dig to a considerable depth in the hope of finding more treasure.

None was found, however, and at last all hands, heavily laden, started for the vessel.

The empty chests were thrown into the pit, the earth dumped in and the place restored, as much as possible, to its former appearance.

When the party reached the vessel and carried the treasure below, the sun was just sinking below the horizon.

"A good day's work," remarked Jack, "and deserves a holiday after it. All hands knock off work."

The next day the treasure was valued, and a share apportioned to each man in the crew from Jack to Tony.

Jack's fortune exceeded the limit set to it by Judge Rollins, and he said proudly:

"If the amount had been thrice that, it would still be but a cheap estimate of my darling's value."

"Were you poor, my dear young friend," replied the judge, "I could not refuse you my daughter's hand, since you both love each other, and since I know that you are fully able to win a fortune for you both by your untiring energy."

"That's not as he spoke before," muttered Don to Daisy, aside, "and I would not even trust him now, were Jack poor and he back in his old home."

"You have no faith in mankind," replied the young lady.

"Yes, I have, but not for him. His past cannot be forgotten, no matter how softly he talks now."

The money being safe in the hold of the vessel, the work on the latter now progressed rapidly, all hands being more than ever anxious to get away.

At last one evening, as the boys knocked off work, Jack declared that everything was in readiness, and that the next day at noon they would leave the island forever.

"Let us take one more stroll over the scenes we have learned to love so well," said Marie, early the next day, the sun just beginning to gild the waves and shore.

It was a happy party that went ashore—Jack, Marie and the judge, Don and Daisy, with Dick and one of his boy crew following behind.

Hardly had they left the beach, however, and entered the grove, before they came face to face with Black Towne and one of the men from the Kite.

"So you think to escape me?" cried the lawyer, addressing Judge Rollins. "Beware, for you are not yet out of my power."

CHAPTER XIII.

REVELATIONS.

"Stand aside, you contemptible wretch," cried Jack, as Towne finished speaking.

"I will, when I have done with you," returned Towne, defiantly.

"Do you think I have time to listen to such as you?" cried Jack, flushing, and clutching as his sword hilt.

"You must!" hissed the other.

Jack would have struck the villain down, but Marie placed a hand upon his arm.

"You are going to marry this girl, are you?" asked Towne.

"I am, and it is with pride I say so," spoke our hero, quickly.

"H'm! Marry the daughter of a thief and a perjurer!" sneered Towne.

"It is a lie!" hissed Jack, leaping forward.

"It is the truth!" cried Towne, stepping back. "Roy Rollins obtained his position by bribery, he has perjured himself, and were I to produce the evidence he could be thrown into prison for the rest of his life."

"It is false! I will not believe it. Harsh and unforgiving he may have been, but a criminal, never!"

"I will prove it," fairly hissed Towne, "unless you give up the girl to me. I can prove that he condemned an innocent man to death, knowing him to be guiltless and having the proofs in his possession the day before the man was hanged."

"Then prove it," cried Rollins. "I defy you to do so. If I have done wrong knowingly I am ready to receive the punishment."

The man had greatly changed, and whereas he had always seemed afraid of Towne hitherto, he now defied him.

The high example set by the noble-hearted Jack had had its influence, and he was a changed man.

Once he would have sold his child for gold; now he sought her highest happiness.

Once he cringed before the wretch, Blackford Towne; now he defied him.

"Do your worst," he cried. "I know I have been cold and sordid, that in my youth I despised all noble sentiments, but that I have been unjust in my official capacity is false."

"Did you not allow an innocent man to die, possessing the proofs of his innocence?"

"No, and I defy you to show the proofs. You say you have them. Produce them."

At this defiance the face of Black Towne became livid.

"Tell all your story," cried Rollins. "I am ready to receive judgment."

Towne tried to speak, but could not, and Jack cried, angrily:

"Liar and knave! you can bring no proofs—you are but a miserable blackmailer. You know nothing, can prove nothing."

"I can," hissed Towne. "Roy Rollins paid ten thousand dollars for his position and received bribes to give certain decisions. I will crush him and you yet, as sure as I live."

"And as sure as I live I'll leave your foul carcass to rot on the shores of this island."

Thus saying, Jack drew his sword and sprang upon the villain.

In another instant it would have fared badly with the wretch had not Tony, the cabin boy, suddenly appeared, crying excitedly:

"Captain Jack, hasten back to the vessel. I have seen a strange craft that came in last night, and her men are now advancing. They are pirates or smugglers, and come on no peaceful errand."

"Hurry to the vessel and give the alarm," cried Jack to Dick, and then he turned toward Towne.

The man and his ally had suddenly disappeared, however, and in another moment Jack heard a sound like the cry of a parrot in the woods at one side.

"Back to the beach," he cried, catching Marie in his arms. "We are betrayed."

Through the grove dashed the little party, Jack at the head clasping his darling to him with one hand and clutching his drawn sword in the other.

As they leaped out upon the sands, the little vessel being now in plain sight, Tony cried excitedly:

"It is Judas and his men. Beat them back!"

As he spoke a band of rough looking men sprang out and cut off their retreat to the vessel.

At their head was the villain whom Jack had before met, and in the party were Bones, Rabbett, Task and Towne himself, beside many others.

"It was that villain who signaled to them," cried Tony, indicating Towne. "For days he has been watching the sea, and last night I saw him making signals, but saw no ship."

"Upon them!" yelled Judas, at the same moment.

Then the whole party, far outnumbering Jack's, sprang forward, and a desperate fight ensued.

Jack and Don were thrown down, despite their fierce resistance, and their sweethearts were torn from their arms.

The numbers of the enemy were too great to allow of any sort of resistance, and yet it seemed as though Judas was not disposed to force his advantage too far.

Towne leaped forward to strike Jack as he lay on the ground stunned, and Tony quickly interposed his slight frame.

Judas, however, was quicker than he, and forced Towne back with a fierce blow, at the same time seizing the boy around the waist.

"Now, you young cub, you are mine at last!" hissed the villain, as he hurried the boy away.

Then the whole party dashed off down the beach and around a point of rocks as Jack and his friends sprang to their feet.

"After them!" cried the boy captain.

Dick now came hurrying up at the head of half a dozen brave boys, and all hands dashed down the beach.

As they reached the bluffs and rounded them they saw four or five boats hurrying through the water, and then from behind a towering cliff a little schooner came in sight.

"It is the Kite," cried Jack. "On hoard, all of you, and give chase. The scoundrels must not escape!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHASE AND THE ESCAPE.

As the sun arose higher and higher in the heavens, two vessels went scudding over the dancing waves under full sail.

One was the Marie, under command of the boy captain; the other was the Kite, ruled by Captain Judas, and bearing that which Jack prized more than life itself.

"Distribute arms to all hands!" commanded Jack to Dick as the chase commenced. "We will board this fellow soon, and then there will be a fight."

An hour passed, however, and the Kite still maintained her lead, though she had not gained any since Jack had started in pursuit.

Both vessels had crowded on all the sail they could possibly carry, and, as the wind was free, both made wonderful speed, and flew over the waters like great white birds.

When it became apparent that the chase was to be a long one, Jack mustered his men in order to see who were missing.

All answered to their names except Tony, and then it was also found that Judge Rollins was not aboard.

"I saw him struck down," explained Dick, "and as he appeared to be dead, I thought that, in the hurry and confusion, it was best to leave him and return for him later."

"I thought he had been carried away with the rest," added Don. "I certainly did not see him when we hurried in pursuit."

"If he is dead there is little use in returning for him," said Jack, sadly, "for the winds and the waves, the beasts and the birds will leave no trace of him, and just now we must follow that scoundrel yonder."

"Perhaps he hoped to rescue his daughter," suggested Syd, "and when we overtake the Kite we shall find him."

"Let us hope so," returned Jack, and then all eyes were turned toward the flying vessel.

Another hour had passed, and the Marie had gained slightly, and as the chase lay across the ocean and not toward any land, there was some hope of their overtaking the enemy.

Jack could not crowd on any more canvas, but the sails were given a thorough wetting, which caused them to draw better and thus increase the speed of the schooner, as was seen at the end of another hour, the lead of the Kite having been greatly reduced.

"We will have him yet," muttered Jack, with an anxious look at the horizon.

Before long, however, the signs of an approaching disturbance in the elements were plainly visible, and Jack examined the barometer with eager interest.

The glass was falling too rapidly for him to neglect its warning, and he at once ordered in the greater part of his canvas, after which the vessel seemed to ride easier and make better headway.

The Kite had also furled most of her sails, as could be seen, and was losing ground steadily.

The storm was at hand, however, and presently the sky became so dark that it was impossible to see any object at a greater distance than the vessel's length.

Darker and still darker grew the heavens, the heavy clouds rolling up in great masses until it seemed as if night had settled over all the ocean.

Then the wind burst forth, lashing the waves into foam and howling like a thousand demons through and through the shrouds and rigging.

The little vessel rode proudly above the waves, showing her builder's skill, and though billow and billow hurled itself against her, she withstood the shock and dashed on as though defying the storm.

Every brave boy in the crew stood nobly at his post, and not one quailed or grew faint as they rushed on and on across the seething ocean.

The Kite was lost to sight, but Jack followed on her track until night came on, and he knew that there was little chance of overtaking him in the darkness.

The vessel kept on, however, until morning, when the storm had greatly abated.

Nothing was seen of the other vessel, and Jack came to the conclusion that she had been brought to during the night, and that he had passed her without knowing it.

Jack therefore put about and returned on the course of the

preceding night, ordering the men to keep a sharp lookout for vessels of any kind coming in the opposite direction.

They continued thus till late in the afternoon, when Syd espied a vessel coming toward them, and reported the fact to Jack.

When the stranger drew nearer she proved to be a brig, but Jack determined to hail her nevertheless.

When near enough he made signals that he wished to communicate with the stranger, and soon after lowered a boat and went aboard.

The brig was the *Margaret*, and was bound for Rio, having been driven somewhat out of her course the night before.

"Have you passed any vessels to-day?" asked Jack.

"Yes, I saw a schooner about the size of yours, heading north by west this morning."

"About our size?"

"Yes, but not as new. She was speedy, though, and I don't believe you could beat her except in a long race."

"It's the *Kite*," muttered Jack, and then relating briefly his adventures, but saying nothing of the treasure, he quickly dropped into his boat and returned to the *Marie*.

"I've heard of him," he said to Don, as he sprang aboard and gave orders to proceed in the direction which the *Kite* had taken, "but I'm afraid it'll be hard to catch him."

"He won't venture back to Lester," said Don, when Jack had told his story, "but there are plenty of ports in the South where he can run in."

"Then I'm after him," cried Jack, "for those two girls must be saved."

"You might as well say three," added Dick.

"What do you mean?" asked Jack, greatly puzzled.

"Why, if our cabin boy, Tony, don't turn out to be a girl in disguise, I'll never express another opinion."

"A girl in disguise!" cried both Jack and Don in great astonishment.

"Yes, and more than that. Captain Judas has more of an object in detaining her than if she were only a cabin boy."

"You surprise me, Dick," said Jack.

"I was surprised myself, but if I'm not right I'll give up my commission."

CHAPTER XV.

DICK'S OPINIONS BACKED UP.

"Do you honestly mean to tell me, Dick Steere, that you really believe Tony to be a girl in disguise?"

"I honestly do, Captain Jack Reef, and I'll give you my reasons."

The two, captain and second mate, were seated in Jack's cabin, Don having charge of the deck.

"Well, then, go ahead, for this is the strangest thing I ever heard of."

"In the first place Tony is not built like a boy of the age he pretends to be, and as he should be, with the life he has led."

"Well?"

"Next he loves you as no boy could, no matter how much you had done for him."

"Loves me, you say."

"Yes, and if you hadn't been so wrapped up in your own love you would have seen it in a hundred ways."

"For instance?"

"Why, in his watchfulness, in his strict attention to duty. Why, I knew at the first that there was something strange, for he watched over you as a mother guards her child."

"Mightn't a grateful boy show the same feeling?"

"Not to such an extent. He was quick to discover any danger which threatened you, ready at all times to shield you from peril with his own body, always at your side, ever jealous for your safety, never happier than when serving you."

"You really surprise me, Dick. I never noticed anything more than an ordinary liking of a boy whom I had befriended."

"Well, all I know is, that if I were loved as Tony loves you, I should want nothing else. Every glance of his eyes, every expression of his handsome face, every motion, not only tell that he loves you, but indicate the woman."

"You must have watched him pretty closely, Dick?"

"I have, for I felt what a hopeless passion was his, and also that—"

There Dick paused abruptly, and Jack, looking suddenly into his face, saw a deep flush mantle all his countenance.

"Dick, old fellow," he said, quietly, but earnestly, "you love this mysterious woman of ours yourself."

"I do," answered Dick, in a whisper. "At first it was pity, then sympathy, then a wish that I might be loved as you were, and now it is an overmastering passion that I cannot control."

"Then it is more important than ever that we overtake this villain and rescue those whom we love from his grasp."

"Command me in all things, Captain Jack," cried Dick, warmly. "To know your wishes is to obey them."

Jack related to Don what Dick had told him, and the latter was as much astonished as Jack had been.

"That fellow Judas must know this," he observed, "for you must remember how anxious he was to get Tony back."

"And now the scoundrel has carried the boy away. Yes, there is a mystery here, but some day we may unravel it and all be clear as day."

All that day and night the little vessel kept on, and later on the next day ran into one of the ports of Barbadoes, where Jack made inquiries for a vessel answering to the *Kite*'s description.

"Is she commanded by a dark, heavily-bearded man, known as Judas?" asked an Englishman—one of the officials of the place.

"The same."

"Then he'd better be careful how he comes in here, for we've long been on the watch for him. Why, the fellow's no better than a pirate."

"I know that, to my cost."

"He does a lively trade in smuggling, and has been chased more than once, but always manages to get off. He has been suspected, too, of attacking small coasting and trading vessels and seizing their cargoes, and this, too, at a time when piracy is supposed to have been entirely put down."

Having no particular business on the island, Jack departed the next morning, after laying in a supply of fresh fruit and vegetables, and stood toward the north once more.

He touched at St. Lucia, Martinique, St. Kitts, Antigua and other islands, but heard nothing of Judas or his vessel, and was proceeding toward the United States when he fell in with a vessel bound from Jamaica for New York.

Jack made known his errand, and the captain of the other vessel exclaimed at once:

"The fellow you are after was at Jamaica when I left. You'll find him at Kingston. There were a couple of young ladies aboard, but they never went ashore."

"Didn't the British authorities try to overhaul his vessel?"

"There was some talk of it, but a chap he had on board claimed to be the owner and responsible for everything, and he swore that there was a mistake, and that his skipper was as honest a man——"

"Was his name Towne?" asked Jack, quickly.

"No—it was Blackwell, or something like that."

"Blackford, perhaps?"

"Yes, that's it."

"Then he's the man I want, and he's every bit as big a rascal as Judas."

"What! is the skipper old Judas Prime? Why, if I'd been sure of that, I'd have hauled him up myself for piracy, and more, too. He kidnapped a boy from New Orleans when I lived there, and there's been a big hunt for him ever since, and a reward offered."

"What was the boy's name?"

"He was called Antoine Leblanc and generally Tony White, but that wasn't his——"

"That's the man, sure enough, and as sure as my name's Jack Reef, I'll hunt him down."

"Jack Reef!" cried the other. "Why, you can't be the son of my old chum, Cap'n George Reef, of Lester, in the State of——"

"Oh, but I am, though," answered Jack, quickly.

"Then when you see him just remember me to him, Cap'n Josh Hudson, of the *Warbler*, brigantine, of the State and City of New York."

"Happy to do so, Captain Hudson, but as you will reach the States first, please report that the *Rover*, brig, of Lester, Captain Jack Reef, was lost in the Caribbean, and that the *Marie* schooner, has been constructed from her remains, and is bound home."

"Why, of course," cried the other heartily, "and glad to be the bearer of good news."

The two vessels then parted, and Jack headed for Jamaica by way of the windward passage.

"Dick," he said to the second mate, "have courage, and we'll see the object of your love as well as mine before many days."

CHAPTER XVI.

A FORTUNATE MEETING.

The harbor of Kingston was bright with glistening sails and waving buntings, the white sand on the beach glistening in the clear sunlight, the sea dancing and splashing in sparkling waves, while beyond the dark groves of coffee and other tropical productions and the stately abodes of the better classes formed a pleasing background to the more lively scenes in front.

A neat little schooner flying the American colors had just dropped anchor, and now a boat left its side bearing two young gentlemen of impressive bearing, and rowed by four stalwart fellows, tall and bronzed, and yet young in years, as their looks plainly indicated.

Not to keep the reader longer in doubt, Jack Reef had just brought his schooner into port, and with Dick was going ashore to report at the Custom House and make inquiries respecting Towne and Captain Judas.

The young commander was well received, his papers were pronounced satisfactory and he himself given every mark of respect.

When it was learned from him that Judas had been in port and might be still, considerable excitement was created.

"We have heard of him," said an officer, "and we are expecting official instructions concerning him."

"Would you allow him to leave unmolested if you failed to receive them?" asked Jack.

"Yes, for as yet there are merely suspicions against him, and he has already passed the custom house."

"He is here, then?" asked Jack, excitedly.

"He has been."

"But he has not left yet?"

The officer called in one of the clerks, and asked him a few questions.

"Mr. Blackford has taken out his clearance papers this morning," said the officer.

"Did Judas, or Captain Prime, as he may call himself, appear here?"

"No, though his name appears in the papers."

"Where did his vessel lay? By the way, what was she called?"

"The Kite, and she is at the western levee."

"That is sufficient," answered Jack quickly, and, nodding to Dick, he passed out of the room.

As they reached the street they heard the report of a cannon.

"What is that?" asked Jack of a negro laborer standing near.

"Ship go out, massa, den they fire a gun."

"Ah!" and Jack passed rapidly along the wharf.

Suddenly, as he turned a corner formed by a warehouse, he saw a boy talking excitedly to some of the officers in uniform.

"By Jove! there she is now!" cried Dick, seizing Jack's arm.

Jack was about to speak, when the boy ahead of him caught a glimpse of his face, and with a glad cry, left the officers and ran toward Jack.

"Captain Jack Reef, thank heaven!" he exclaimed. "I trust you may not have come too late!"

The boy was Tony, and as Jack looked closely at him he wondered why he had not made the same discovery that Dick had.

"Where are the others, my boy?" asked Jack. "Take me to them at once."

"When did you come in?" asked Tony quickly.

"About an hour since."

"Ah, that is why I was not more closely pursued. The villain knew that you were here."

"What villain?"

"Judas."

"Did you escape from him?"

"Yes, and took away the young lady."

"Is Marie safe?" cried Jack, with intense excitement.

"No, I could not rescue her, and as it was we were nearly taken, but, luckily, Miss Daisy could row as well as I, and then the excitement caused by your arrival——"

"Did you know we had come in?" asked Dick.

"No, not for certain, though I suspected it, but when they abandoned the chase I knew that something was up."

"What were you telling those officers?" asked Jack.

"That Judas, the pirate, was here, and that if they wanted to catch him they had better hurry."

At this juncture the officers came up and Tony said:

"This is Captain Jack Reef of the American service, gentlemen. He came here in pursuit of the pirate I spoke of."

"The American navy is honored in having secured the services of Captain Reef," replied one of the officers, touching his hat. "I am Lieutenant Kingsland of Her Majesty's cutter Daunt, at anchor in the bay."

Jack did not think it necessary to correct the lieutenant's mistake, but said quickly:

"The Kite has but just left the harbor, gentlemen, and I propose to chase her. May I offer you the hospitality of my vessel during the chase?"

"That might necessitate a voyage across the Atlantic or to the States, for they say the Kite is a very swift sailer."

"You say that Miss Daisy had escaped from the Kite," said Dick to Tony. "Where is she?"

"In the house at the end of the quay."

"Will you show me the place?"

"Yes, and then——"

"Come aboard," answered Jack.

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Dick and Tony in a breath.

The party then separated, and when Dick had gone a few steps with the former cabin-boy, he said:

"Will you not trust your secret to me, my girl?"

Tony turned as pale as death, and would have fallen had not Dick caught him in his arms.

"You know?" he gasped.

"Yes, and your love for Jack Reef as well. Do not fear to tell all, for I——"

"Not now," cried Tony, hastily recovering himself. "Come, follow me. There is work to do."

"And all for Jack—none for me," thought poor Dick, as he hurried after the boy.

In a few minutes they reached the place where Tony had left Daisy, and in ten minutes more Don clasped his sweetheart in his arms.

The anchor had already been raised, and Jack now gave orders to get up sail and go after the fugitives.

"Heaven grant I may succeed in running down the miscreant!" he cried—a wish that found an echo in all hearts.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CABIN BOY RELATES THE STORY OF HIS LIFE.

"How did you manage to get away from Judas?"

It was the young second mate who asked this question of the cabin boy as both were seated in the mess-room aft, the Marie being now well under way.

"It was not such a difficult matter," answered Tony. "I was allowed the freedom of the vessel, as both Judas and Towne thought there was little chance of my running away in such a place as Jamaica."

"We had been there several days, and everything seemed to favor the plans of the villains, who succeeded in disposing of their cargo and in quieting the suspicion of the government officials."

"Towne took out clearance papers this morning, but there was no intention of sailing immediately unless something happened which they had not foreseen."

"I had run up aloft, more to be busy than because I was looking for any one, when I discovered a vessel which I knew at once must be the Marie or its twin, and I hurried below as quickly as I could without attracting attention."

"Would you have done so if you had not thought of Jack?" asked Dick.

Tony blushed, hung his head for a moment and went on hurriedly:

"Then for the first time I thought I might outwit the villains, and in a moment my plans were laid."

"There was a boat towing astern, and as I passed the cabin doors I called quickly to Daisy, who was in sight, to follow me.

"Quick as thought I helped her over the side and into the boat, and then hurriedly called to Marie to follow.

"She heard, but was prevented from following, and Towne gave the alarm and tried to stop me.

"With all my strength I struck the wretch a blow in the face which staggered him, and then I leaped into the boat, cut the warp, seized the oars and pulled for shore.

"They lowered a boat to give chase, but Daisy seized another pair of oars and gave me the greatest possible assistance, for otherwise I should have been overtaken.

"I might have been as it was, but the skipper hastily recalled us and we made all speed to shore and landed, when I soon found a place of safety for Daisy, and then hurried along the quay in order to give information of Judas and his band.

"Then I knew that the skipper had seen the same vessel I had, and that he suspected that Jack had arrived and was anxious to get away.

"I met some officers and told them my story, but they had a lot of questions to ask, and would not believe me, or referred me to some lord or another, and so much valuable time was lost.

"However, I determined not to be baffled, and resolved to go to the Custom House or to the American Consul's office and tell my story, hoping I might be in time to prevent the Kite from getting away, even if the vessel I had seen should prove to be not Jack's, but another.

"Once or twice I was stopped by rough sailors, surly negroes and man-of-war's men on a lark, and in getting away from them I went astray more than once, but at last I struck down upon the quays again, took my bearings and forged ahead.

"Then I fell in with a party of English officers and had made them interested in my story when I espied Jack—Captain Reef, I should say, and the rest you know."

"We owe much to your devotion to our captain," said Dick, "but tell me, if you will, how you came to adopt this disguise and masquerade as a boy?"

"Would it please you to know my sad story?" asked Tony, in a low tone.

"You would tell it to Jack Reef?" questioned Dick, in the same tone.

"Yes," and the cabin boy, as we must still consider him, dropped his voice still lower.

"Then tell it to me," cried Dick, nervously. "I know—I have seen your hopeless passion for Captain Jack. He loves another, he can never be yours, but I may, for your sad face has awakened pity in my heart and I have grown to love you in spite of myself."

There was no resisting Dick's passionate appeal, and the disguised girl, taking his hand, said:

"It was all an accident at first, but it saved my brother from many troubles, and, since I have found such good friends, my own trials are forgotten.

"There were two of us, my brother and myself, and we were twins and greatly resembled each other, although those who knew us well could easily tell us apart.

"We lived in New Orleans, with our father, as we supposed him, and were very happy, having enough to live on and contented with our lot.

"Not alone in looks were we alike, but in name also, for I was Antoinette and my brother Antoine, and, in fact, I was called Tony so much that I became quite used to it.

"One night—it was the last night of the carnival, which, as you may know, is made much of in Southern cities—my brother and myself determined to play a trick upon our friends and to change clothes, I appearing as a boy and he as a girl.

"This was done, and we went to the ball together, but during the evening I lost sight of him and went outside to look for him, when I was suddenly seized, blindfolded and gagged, and hurried away in a closed carriage.

"I fainted from fright, and when I recovered found myself in a vessel already speeding down the river toward the gulf.

"I heard Judas, as I afterward learned to call him, talking with a woman, and they were speaking of some one who would give them a large sum of money if the Leblanc boy was kept out of sight and not permitted to take his real name.

"From this I surmised that there was some mystery concerning me, and I afterward learned that my name was not Leblanc or White, though what it was or who my parents were I never could learn.

"The old woman discovered the secret of my sex, but Judas swore he would hold me until he was paid for my release; and so you found me, a poor slave of a cabin boy, on board that villain's vessel."

"Sail ho!" was suddenly shouted from aloft, and Tony's story came to an abrupt ending.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A STERN CHASE IS A LONG CHASE.

Dick and his companion hastened upon deck and found that the Kite had been sighted in the distance, and that Captain Jack was now crowding on all sail in order to come up with her.

"The fox shall not escape me now," cried Jack, "if I have to chase him around the world."

An hour or more passed, and it was seen that Jack was gradually gaining, the wind being a rather more favorable one for his vessel than for the Kite.

"If he lands anywhere I will have him sure," muttered Jack, as he sat in his cabin studying the chart. "I hardly think he will do so, however, as he seems to be pretty well known hereabouts, and honest sailors are on the watch for him."

Jack's chief hope of success lay in keeping the skipper in sight and running him down, for the rascal would need but one chance to get away and reach some port unmolested to make all Jack's future efforts to catch him fruitless.

"Was Judge Rollins on board, Tony?" asked Jack, as Dick and the young girl came into the cabin where he sat.

"No, sor, I did not see him after we left the island."

"Was he killed?"

"He was struck down—but that is all I know."

"Did you hear any one speak of his having been killed?"

"No, sir."

"How were the young ladies treated on board the Kite?"

"Fairly well, considering all things."

"They were not subjected to any indignities or insults?"

"No, though Towne was familiar toward Miss Rollins. He seemed trying to get into her good graces."

"And Judas?"

"Was drunk a good part of the time. He swore that I should make his fortune yet, and that some day I must marry him."

"Where is the old woman you told me about once?"

"I don't know. She left the vessel when we came north, and at the time I met you in Lester I had not seen her in many months."

"You have acted bravely, Miss Leblanc," said Jack, after a pause, "and if it ever comes within my power to restore your rights to you and solve the mystery which surrounds you, be assured I will do it."

"May I ask a favor of you, Captain Jack?" said the young girl, in earnest tones.

"A hundred, if you will."

"Then will you call me Tony as you use to?"

"My dear Miss Leblanc, this——"

"It is all I ask."

"But it seems hardly respectful, now that I know you no longer as a cabin boy, but as a young lady."

"I prefer that you should, and I can see no disrespect in it."

"If you will let me say Miss Tony, then I shall be glad to call you so."

"She loves him yet," thought Dick. "Will the time ever come when I can call her all my own?"

"Let it be Miss Tony, since you wish it," answered the girl with a smile, as she grasped Jack's hand and pressed it warmly.

A few minutes later Tony and Daisy were seated in the shadow of the mainsail, amidship, talking and laughing merrily with Don.

All that day the chase was continued, for Jack had resolved not to lose sight of his crafty foe.

Shortly after darkness had set in the moon arose in all her splendor, casting a perfect flood of light over the ocean, and

revealing all objects upon the horizon with the utmost distinctness.

The Kite was as plainly visible as she had been during the day, and Jack pressed on under full sail, resolving not to lose sight of her for an instant.

The regular watches were taken as usual, but when Jack went below he gave orders that he be called if the sky became overcast or the Kite changed her course.

No change took place during the night, and in the morning the Kite was observed speeding along to the eastward, and evidently bound for the passage between the islands of Sano Domingo and Puerto Rico.

All that day and night and the following day the chase was kept up, and although more than five hundred miles had been covered, it seemed no nearer the end than at first.

The Kite scudded on with all the desperation of a man fleeing for his life, and Jack followed with a dogged persistence that showed his resolute and determined character.

On the third day, toward noon, the vessels being then in the Atlantic and speeding northward, a large ship was seen, and Don, observing her closely through the telescope, reported that she and the Kite seemed to be exchanging signals.

Half an hour later the strange ship displayed English colors, and opened fire upon Jack.

"Run up the Stars and Stripes," cried Jack, "and get out the arms and ammunition. Big as he is, I'll show this insolent Englishman that I am not afraid of him."

Up went the colors, but a shot came tearing through the rigging and narrowly missing doing great damage.

A second shot passed across the bows, and a third knocked away the end of the jibboom and brought everything down by the run, stopping the vessel's headway at once.

"Confound them," muttered Jack, "if they would only come within short range, I'd tell them a different story."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ATTACK EXPLAINED.

"What is the meaning of this outrage, anyhow?" muttered Don, as the English cruiser fired another shot which weakened the mainmast. "That's what I'd like to know."

"I did not know that we had any trouble with England," added Dick. "It can't be that some fuss has taken place since we left home."

"She's no better than a pirate," stormed Dick, "and if I ever get out of this alive, I'll make it warm for somebody."

The stranger now ceased firing, but as the smoke began to clear away she could be seen bearing down upon them.

"Where is the Kite?" asked Don.

For a moment she could not be seen, but then Dick exclaimed:

"There she goes, scudding away as fast as she can spin, a good five miles in the lead."

"And but for this outrage I would have overhauled her to-day!" cried Jack, in a passion.

Nearer came the Englishman, as if about to try conclusions at short range, though her gunners were now seen standing ready at their pieces.

"I'll show this villain my teeth at any rate!" hissed Jack. "Arm all hands, Mr. Hall, and bid every man fight like tigers."

"Captain Jack!" cried a voice at the boy captain's elbow, as Don hurried off to obey his superior's orders.

"Well?" and Jack, turning sharply, beheld Tony at his side.

"I see it all," she cried, "and I will yet save the vessel."

"What do you mean?"

"Haul down your colors, and run them up again reversed."

"Make a sign of surrender?" cried Jack, in a rage. "Never!"

"That is not a token of surrender," answered the girl, quickly. "It is the signal of distress, and no pirate makes that sign."

"But I am not a pirate."

"You have been taken for one, and that is what the wily Judas intended."

"Taken for a pirate!" echoed Jack, a light beginning to dawn upon him.

"Yes, and for the Kite herself."

"Haul down the colors!" shouted Jack.

At the same moment Tony sprang to the rail and waved a large white handkerchief.

Down came the colors, but they were run up again quickly, the blue field down.

"Then it was not as an American, but as a supposed pirate that we were fired upon?" cried Dick.

"Yes, and that's what that scoundrel was signaling," added Don.

"The wretch signaled that he was the Marie, being chased by the Kite, in command of Judas," cried Tony. "It's as clear as day."

The Englishman had now drawn closer, and considerable of a commotion was observed going on upon her quarter-deck, where her officers were congregated.

Rounding to until she was brought within speaking distance, she passed the disabled schooner, when an officer shouted through a big brass trumpet:

"What schooner is that?"

"The Marie, Captain Jack Reef, built from the wreck of the brig Rover, of New York. Send a boat aboard."

"Aren't you the smuggling schooner Kite, commanded by one Junius Prime, called Captain Judas for short?"

"No, and you've made a thundering ass of yourself," roared Jack, forgetting all naval and other etiquette in his anger and indignation.

"There goes the Kite as fast as she can travel!" he added, "and if you had stopped to investigate a bit, instead of going off at half-cock, you'd have seen your mistake."

Jack was too angry to exchange courtesies with any one now, and he trod the deck like an angry lion, as he cried to Don:

"Run up the colors as they should be, and clear away the wreck of the jibboom. We must follow this fellow without delay."

"The mainmast is badly damaged, sir," said Dick, "and I fear would not stand much of a strain upon it."

"Then house the topmasts and rig a jury mast till we can repair it. I cannot lose any more time."

By this time a boat had been lowered from the frigate, and presently the first officer stepped aboard and said courteously:

"Captain Reef, my superior captain, the Honorable Courtenay Rounds, begs leave to express his sincere regrets that this misfortune should have happened and tenders every assistance toward putting your vessel in good condition again."

"The least he can do," replied Jack, brusquely. "How long, pray, has your captain been in command of the frigate?"

"Only a few months."

"H'm! Some young sprig of nobility pushed into position above his betters, I suppose," muttered Jack impatiently.

"Excuse me, Captain Reef, but you do not appear to be so remarkably old yourself, and yet you are in command of this vessel."

"I am an American!" cried Jack proudly, "and here all men are equal. Besides, here our young men are taught common sense and not to depend upon the accident of birth for position."

"Ah, we had not better argue that point, sir," replied the lieutenant courteously, "for you are very properly nettled at the treatment you have received and can scarcely talk coolly."

"I should say not," returned Jack. "That villain yonder is carrying off my sweetheart, and for more than a week, on and off, I've been pursuing him, and now you come along and knock away my sticks and let that fellow escape."

"I tender you all apologies, Captain Reef, and ran here to give you every assistance in our power."

"Step into my cabin, sir," said Jack, only a little mollified, "and I'll show you my papers."

"That is not necessary, sir. Your word is quite sufficient."

"What I say needs to be attested," answered Jack, as he led the way.

The English captain made due amends for his mistake in firing upon Jack, and repairs were at once begun, a new jibboom and mainmast being supplied from spare sticks on board the frigate.

The rest of the day was exhausted, and the Kite had disappeared before these operations were well under way, but Jack was hopeful of overtaking the miscreants yet.

It was Towne who wished to possess Marie and not Judas, and it was not likely, therefore, that the rascally lawyer

would care to land in any foreign port, but would prefer to return to his own country.

Now that Judge Rollins was dead, in all probability, he might even return to Lester and resume business, being impudent enough for anything.

It was quite evident, therefore, that the Kite would make for some point on the United States coast, and Jack determined to follow up his pursuit of the vessel and her rascally commander with a persistent spirit.

The repairs to the vessel occupied the greater part of the next day, and then the voyage continued, the English captain wishing Jack god-speed.

The pleasant weather of the last week now began to change, and on the day succeeding the separation the clouds began to assume a decidedly disagreeable aspect.

These warnings were not idle threats, for by noon the wind blew a gale, and the sea ran so high that there was scarcely any living in it.

The little vessel had been well built, and bravely stood up against the repeated shocks of wind and wave as though knowing how much depended upon her.

In spite of skillful management, however—in spite of her sturdy sides and tough sails—the storm seemed destined to prove too much for the stanch little vessel.

Jack remained on deck through all the tumult of storm and tempest, doing his best to save the vessel, and hoping that she might yet outride the storm.

The winds and waves were relentless, however, and after buffeting ahead until dark, weakened by every shock, she was reported to be badly leaking, the water gaining every moment.

Then a huge wave swept over her, heeling her on her beam ends, the mainmast being strained beyond endurance and snapping in two like a reed, tearing a terrible hole in the deck, and opening all the seams.

The foremast followed soon afterward, and then the vessel was found to be leaking so badly that she could not be kept afloat more than an hour at the furthest.

It seemed impossible that any boats could withstand such terrible billows, and yet these were now the only refuge, the only means of protection, and all that separated them from a grave at the bottom of the sea.

CHAPTER XXV.

A VOICE FROM OVER THE SEA.

Morning dawned bright and glorious over the broad expanse of ocean.

At the last moment, and the vessel had floated longer than it was supposed she would, the boats had been launched with great difficulty and all hands were safe.

Provisions and water, together with a few other necessities, were put in, and then the sinking vessel was abandoned and the boy captain and his crew trusted themselves to the pitiless ocean.

"Of all the immense treasure that had been taken away from the island not an ounce left the vessel, for there were other things more precious than gold or jewels to be saved at that moment.

So the wealth of the pirates went to the bottom with the beloved vessel, while she after whom it had been named was still at the mercy of a heartless villain and her young lover adrift on the ocean, not knowing what moment might be his last.

Happily, however, the boats floated, and when the sun arose the sea had subsided sufficiently to allow of sail being made.

The nearest land of any importance was Bermuda or the Florida coast, and Jack decided in favor of the latter, taking his course accordingly.

"Fortunately," said he, "we are in the track of vessels, but, nevertheless, we must husband our resources and make the most of everything."

This caution proved to be a wise one, for as the day advanced the wind died down, and by the middle of the afternoon watch there was scarcely enough to fill even their boat sails.

At nightfall even this had failed them, and they were obliged to use oars in order to make any progress.

There were three boats, and that they might not become separated warps were extended from one to the other, form-

ing a sort of chain, Jack's boat being in advance and Dick's on the end.

For all that there was no wind, the skies were overcast, and neither the moon nor stars afforded them light, so that they were in darkness, it being thought scarcely necessary to hoist lanterns in view of the calm.

"The only thing that might possibly run us down," observed Jack, "is a steamer; but she will have her lights up, and we must keep watch for them."

Two or three hours passed, the boys all pulling steadily, but at last Jack ordered a rest to be taken, as he did not wish to tire out his crew unnecessarily.

"If there were anything to do one would not mind the calm and the darkness," observed Dick, after a long pause, "but we can't walk across decks, nor even have a quiet game of checkers."

"And I don't smoke," observed Syd in the next boat, "so there's that comfort gone."

"I do, but I can't," chimed in Nate, "as I have no pipe."

"I'll lend you one if you'll give me a match," cried Washburn.

"I'd do it in a minute, my boy, but I have none."

"Then give me some tobacco, and I'll borrow a light."

"Couldn't do that, either, old chap."

"You only said you had no pipe."

"Did I? Well, if you'd waited, you would have heard me add, 'nor anything else.'"

"I suppose we might sing," said Phil. "Joe, Bob and Ed have good voices."

"And so have you and Tony," added Fon to Daisy. "Couldn't you start up a song?"

"It would liven things up a bit," said Dick to Tony.

"Yes, Miss Tony, won't you sing?" asked Jack.

"If you wish it, Captain Jack."

"Always Jack," thought Dick. "She said nothing when I spoke about it."

"What shall I sing?" asked the girl.

"Anything you please."

"Then You'll Remember Me?"

"Yes, that will do nicely."

"And he'll forget her as soon as he finds Marie," muttered Dick to himself. "Why can't she ask me that?"

"Will you help me?" asked Tony of Daisy, who sat in the next boat.

"Certainly."

Tony began the song, but had sung not more than a line when she suddenly stopped.

"What's the matter?" cried Dick.

"Some one else is singing."

"Yes, Miss Daisy."

"No, no, I don't mean that," cried the girl excitedly.

"Some one else on the water, out there," pointing ahead.

"Some one singing on the water?" asked Jack, in astonishment.

"Yes; listen a moment."

No one seemed to breathe and all listened most intently, ready to catch the slightest sound.

And then, borne faintly across the deep so that they could just barely catch the sound, came the notes of that same song which Tony had started to sing.

"It is she," whispered Tony to herself, Dick thought. "We used to sing it together."

"It is Marie," murmured Jack. "I feel it, I know it."

"Who would not know the voice of her he loves," said Dick, half unconscious, as thought thinking aloud. "Would that I might hear a voice calling to me across the sea, but my love, like her love, is hopeless."

He felt a pressure upon his hand at that moment, and knew that he had uttered his thoughts aloud.

"Hush!" whispered a voice at his side; but the word revived the hope within him, and he whispered as he returned the pressure:

"Then my passion is not hopeless?"

"No," came the answer in a tone scarcely audible, the reply being felt rather than heard.

"Pull ahead, slow and easy," said Jack. "I must hear that voice again."

Over the sea glided the boats, and now ears were strained to catch the first note of that mysterious singing, which, in his strange place, amid the darkness and silence, seemed to come from no human lips.

After a long time they heard the music, but not the words

of one of Moore's songs, though, as he listened, Jack almost felt that he heard Marie saying

"I feel like one who treads alone
Some banquet hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but him departed."

"Pull ahead, boys," he whispered. "Let go the warps, but all follow me."

"Would you call to me like that if you knew I was waiting to hear the sound of your voice?" whispered Dick to the one at his side as his boys took up their oars and pulled with a long and steady stroke.

"Would you come at my call?" she whispered.

"Ay, that would I, though the ocean rolled between us."

"Then some day I may," she answered, taking his hand.

"Call when you will, and I will obey the summons."

"Boys," said Jack, after a pause, "yonder lies the Kite. She must be ours. Are you with me?"

"We are!" came in low, determined tones from every soul within sound of his voice.

"Then pull a long, steady stroke, and make no needless noise."

CHAPTER XXI

THE BOY CAPTAIN TAKES COMMAND OF THE KITE.

With a firm and steady stroke the oars dipped into the water, and with rapid strides the boats shot ahead, drawing nearer every instant to the vessel, whose lights now shone like two great eyes through the darkness.

After pulling for some time, the dark outline of the Kite became plainly visible, and Jack ordered the boys to row more slowly, and to avoid making even the slightest sound, for there might be sharp ears on board the Kite, and a very little might betray them.

On and on went the boats till at last they lay within the shadow of the schooner.

"When I give the word," whispered Jack, "let every man but one to look after the boats scramble up the side. Once on deck, secure the helmsman and the lookout, and beat down every man who opposes."

"What's that noise?" muttered a man on deck to a companion.

"Now!" whispered Jack.

In an instant a dozen active forms sprang into the main chains and climbed like monkeys up the side.

Tony was at Dick's side, for he had vainly begged her to stay in the boat, Will alone remaining to protect Daisy.

"Come!" said Tony, as she climbed nimbly up, her sea life having accustomed her to such work. "Come, Dick, it is my wish."

"I obey," cried the young officer, and in another moment he and Tony sprang together upon the deck of the Kite.

"What's all this?" shouted the lookout, in sudden alarm.

In another instant Syd had felled him to the deck with his fist.

Nate rushed aft and knocked down the helmsman as he was about to give the alarm, while the others spread swiftly over the deck attacking all who appeared.

The men on watch were surprised and captured, and while Don secured the forecastle hatch, so that no one could come up, Jack, with two or three of his brave boys at his side, dashed into the cabin.

The mate came rushing out to know what had caused the tumult, but Phil knocked him down with a handspike.

Then he and Walt dragged him into a stateroom and locked the door on the outside, giving the key to Jack.

The fellow gave a vicious kick at the panels, and the noise aroused Judas, who came hurrying out half dressed.

"Good evening, skipper," cried Jack, with his drawn sword in his hand. "We've come to call."

"Jack Reef, by all that's bad!" exclaimed Judas. "What in the fiend's name brings you here? I thought I had done with you forever."

"Not yet, villain!" cried Jack, springing upon the wretch and hurling him against the door of his room.

"What are you about now, you drunken fool?" cried a voice, and in another instant Blackford Towne appeared in the cabin looking as black as a thunder-cloud.

"Ha, ha! Belial comes to join Satan!" cried Jack. "Secure him, boys; secure them both."

"Jack Reef here? I thought you dead."

"Ay! Jack Reef, indeed! Long live the boy captain."

"Jack!" cried a voice from within—a voice that stirred the brave boy's inmost soul.

"Marie! My life, my soul, my own darling!"

A door flew open, and Marie, her fair hair falling over her shoulders, her form enveloped in a loose robe, sprang into her young lover's arms.

Don felled Towne to the floor, but at that instant Judas sprang at Jack, a gleaming dagger in his hand.

"You young upstart!" he hissed, "I'll be even with you for this!"

In another moment the blow would have fallen—not upon Jack, but in the bosom of her for whom he had dared so much.

A scream was heard, and then a pistol shot, and with a fierce cry of baffled hate the skipper dropped his knife and sank to the floor.

The smoke hovered for an instant in the doorway, and then Dick pressed forward and caught Tony in his arms as she was about to fall.

In her right hand was a smoking pistol.

"You have saved my darling's life," cried Jack, turning toward the cabin gangway.

"Did you do this?" whispered Dick.

"Yes, I have spared her life to him, for he loves her and she loves him."

"Brave girl, who could help loving you for that?"

"I have requited all his goodness to me, Dick, and now——"

She did not finish the sentence, but fell upon Dick's bosom and sobbed like a child.

All these incidents had taken place in the briefest possible time, and now Jack cried out:

"See that no one escapes, and then haul up the boats."

The boy sailors sprang away in every direction, and in a moment Towne and the mate were hurried below and put in irons.

Judas still lay where he had fallen, groaning in agony, but as Jack approached he arose with a sudden effort, knife in hand, and cried:

"I'll defeat you yet, Jack Reef! May I meet you in perdition!"

Then he plunged the knife into his breast, gave a gasp, and fell forward on his face.

CHAPTER XXII.

NEARING THE END.

Captain Judas was dead, Towne was a prisoner, the Kite was in possession of Jack Reef, loved ones had been reunited, and our hero's troubles seemed rapidly drawing to a close.

The body of Judas was buried in the sea, and then Jack set sail for the nearest American port in order to give up the Kite.

A few days later, therefore, he arrived at St. Augustine, Florida, and delivered over the vessel to the authorities, together with a complete account of her captain's deeds previous to his death.

Blackford Towne, the lawyer, being implicated with Judas in the affair, was held to await examination, although he had begged Jack to allow him to escape.

Turk, Rabbett and Bones were charged by Jack with attempting to scuttle the Rover, and were likewise detained, much to their sorrow, as the justice which had so long been blind to their misdeeds seemed now to be overtaking them.

The rest of the crew were allowed to depart, as they had been but tools of Judas, many of them making depositions, however, which were of value in convicting the chief offenders.

Having already sent word to Lester of his safe arrival after so many perilous adventures on sea and shore, Jack now telegraphed to his father.

An answer was received the next day, which was a terrible proof of the mutability of human affairs.

The reply from Captain Reef was brief but to the point, and told a sad story in a few words.

"Dear Jack," it ran, "the banks have failed. Great financial depression. Your fortune and mine swept away. Am glad to hear that you are alive and sorry to send such bad news."
George Reef."

All his savings swept away, his vessel gone, the treasure from the island lost, and nothing left him but youth, health and strength.

It was a terrible change, that from wealth to poverty, and for a moment poor Jack was nearly staggered by the blow.

A reward had been offered for the capture of Judas or his vessel, and in a few days this was paid over to Jack, who divided it among his officers and crew.

Then he was offered the command of a coaster bound for New Orleans with a cargo, thence to Cuba, and lastly to New York, where his commission would end.

Jack accepted the position, and as he was at liberty to choose his own crew, took the boys who had already served him so faithfully, and made ready for the voyage.

The Wanderer was but a schooner, and her voyage could not last over two or three months.

Marie and Daisy were to proceed home and await Jack's return, but Tony decided to go to New Orleans, and begged Jack to allow her to go as a passenger.

Dick added his persuasions, and Jack, knowing now how devoted the girl had been to him, could not refuse her request.

The Wanderer sailed, and in due time arrived in New Orleans, and proceeded to discharge her cargo.

Jack went to the mayor's office, and related all he knew of Judas and his abduction of the young lady.

"So the man is dead," said the mayor. "That is lucky for him, as otherwise he might find himself on the wrong side of a prison. The woman, his accomplice, is in custody, and now the last of a great mystery is cleared up."

"Then you have discovered the identity of the Leblanc children?"

"We have, and the brother is now enjoying his good fortune, needing but one thing to make him happy, and that is the recovery of his sister."

"His real name then is——"

"Harold Girard, and his sister's is Louise. They were left by their father with old Leblanc when mere babies, and he brought them up as his own. Later, a brother claimed the property and employed Judas to abduct the boy, as it was supposed the girl would not inherit."

"But few knew who the children really were, and the plot would have succeeded but for the revelations of the old woman, who, cheated by Judas, thought she would make more money by exposing the plot."

"The uncle fled, the boy's identity was revealed and his claim substantiated, and now he is one of the richest men in the city."

"And the sister?" asked Jack.

"Is entitled to one-half his fortune, and for some time he has been searching for her, but in vain."

"I think I can assist him," said Jack, and obtaining young Girard's address, he returned to Tony, now known as Louise Girard, and told her what he had discovered.

"You are a rich woman, now," said Jack, in conclusion, "but I suppose you will think of your own friends now and then?"

"Think of you!" cried the girl. "If you or Dick want any or all of my fortune to help you in business you are welcome to it, for without your help I should have been poor indeed. No, you will find that I will never forget you."

"Good news for Dick," said Jack, dryly.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BACK FROM THE DEAD.

Young Harold Girard was found that day, and great was his delight at once more meeting his sister, whom he had thought lost to him forever.

Jack became his guest during his stay in the city, and when the merchants of New Orleans heard of the adventures of the boy captain, they were ready to put any amount of business into his hands, and Jack saw that his star was once more in the ascendant.

Jack now took the Wanderer to Cuba, and thence to New York, where, having completed a prosperous voyage, the owners of the vessel offered him a larger one if he cared to take it.

He had already made better terms with some New Orleans parties, whose agents were in New York, and in a month he was to take a ship out for them on a long voyage.

Having some time at his disposal, he determined to take a run up to Lester with Don to see his father and Marie before setting sail.

As Jack and Don were down on the wharves, having been taking a look over the ship, they heard some sailors talking about a man who had been rescued from an island in the ocean, where he had lived all alone for many weary months.

They did not think much about the story, for such adventures were by no means uncommon, but continued upon their way.

Suddenly, however, Don seized Jack's hand, and said in a hoarse whisper, as he pointed ahead:

"Jack Reef, do you believe in ghosts? If you do not, tell me who that man is."

Jack looked, and saw a man, old, wrinkled and bent, approaching them with slow and weary steps.

"Good heavens! can it be possible?" he gasped. "Then it was he of whom we heard the sailors speaking."

At this moment the man looked up, saw the two boys, staggered against a pile of boxes for support and muttered in a husky voice:

"Jack Reef and his friend, as I live! Thank heavens, I have found one friend."

Jack stepped forward and caught the man by the hand.

"Judge Rollins," he cried. "Is it possible? I thought you dead."

"No, Jack, but I am sadly changed."

"You are, indeed. Come in somewhere and rest. I am anxious to hear your story."

"First tell me, is my daughter still living?"

"Marie? Yes, and in health. I am going up to see her in a day or so."

"And you—you still have a ship, you are growing rich?"

"I have lost all," said Jack, sadly, remembering his bargain with this man, "but I am to take a vessel out in a few weeks, and in time I may acquire a fortune, though never as much as I once had."

"You will always have enough to keep her, Jack," answered Rollins. "Take her whenever you wish. I am too broken in spirit to dictate terms to you now. Once I would have sold my child, but now I shall be glad to see her wedded to the man she loves."

"We thought you had been killed at the time we had the fight with Judas and his men on the island," said Don.

"No, I was not killed, but I lay stunned for some time, and when I recovered I was alone on the island."

Judge Rollins went with the two boys to the hotel, and the next day all three started for Lester, Jack having sent word to Marie that he had a surprise in store for her, in order that she might not be too greatly startled by the appearance of her feather, whom she had believed dead so long.

The journey was made by rail, as occupying less time, but during the journey, which required something more than a day, Mr. Rollins grew quite weak, and Jack was obliged to break the trip and stop on the way.

They started in the morning and halted in the afternoon, the journey to be resumed the next morning, which arrangement would bring them into Lester in the afternoon.

By morning, however, the judge had grown alarmingly sick, and when Jack saw him he knew that it would not be possible for them to go on with him.

"You'll have to go on without me, Jack," he said, when the young captain entered. "I can never stand the journey."

"Had I not better send for Marie, then?" asked the young man.

"No, she would not reach here in season."

"I can telegraph, and she will be here by afternoon."

"No. I do not think——"

He had said that much, when he suddenly paused, an expression of pain as well as terror coming into his face.

"Send him away!" he cried, wildly, half rising in bed and pointing toward the door.

Jack turned quickly, and there, standing in the open doorway, his face lighted up with a look of fiendish triumph, stood the villainous lawyer, Blackford Towne.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

"You here!" cried Jack, stepping quickly forward and darting a threatening glance at Towne.

"Oh, yes," replied the other with a cruel smile. "I have been following you ever since you left New York. I thought our friend here might be pleased to see me."

"Then the sooner you take yourself off the better!" cried Jack. "For, unless you object to being thrown downstairs, I would advise you to go at once."

"I don't think you will care to use violence toward one who can tell some disagreeable truths about our friend yonder," laughed Towne, pointing to the bed where Rollins now lay rigid and motionless.

"Liar," cried Jack, fiercely, springing upon Towne and hurrying him toward the landing. "If you open your mouth again I'll hurl you down there as I would a mad dog."

"You are choking me," gasped the villain. "Have mercy! Do you want to strangle me?"

"Tell me the truth," demanded Jack. "Confess that you have lied."

"Yes," moaned Towne, as Jack forced him back against the rail. "I have no proofs."

"And never had."

"No, but he thought so."

"He was never guilty?"

"No, but I swore to prove him so, if he did not do as I said. His offenses were of no account."

"And the stories of bribery?"

"Lies!" cried the scoundrel. "For heaven's sake, don't throw me over."

"And you have threatened him for years for your own base purposes?"

"Yes, it was easy enough."

"Villain! You have thought to play with me in the same way, but you deceived yourself."

"I know it, but let me go and I won't bother you again."

"How did you get away from the South?" asked Jack.

"Got bail, and then jumped it. Didn't expect to see Rollins again, but when I did, I thought I might make a raise out of him."

"Miserable scoundrel. I ought to break your contemptible neck."

"Don't hurt me," whined Towne.

"Where are those villains from the Kite?"

"In prison."

"Where you ought to be," sneered Jack. "Have you any money?"

"Yes; some."

"Then take your departure from here at once, or I'll clap you in jail so tight that you'll never get out."

Then he released his hold upon Towne, and the wretch hurried downstairs as if fearing that Jack might throw him down if he remained longer.

At the bottom he met Don, who, surprised at seeing him, barred his way and said:

"What are you doing out of jail, you dog?"

"I was released," whined Towne, attempting to pass.

"And have been dogging our steps, have you? Get out."

Don accompanied the admonition with a kick that sent the miserable cur reeling along the passage.

Then the young fellow hurried upstairs, a sudden cry from Jack awakening his suspicions.

He found the young commander standing at the door, his face the color of ashes.

"He is dead, Don," gasped Jack.

"The judge?"

"Yes."

"Was it the work of that villain I met just now in the hall below?"

"Partly; the shock was too great."

"Then I'm sorry I did not break that fellow's neck."

Jack covered the face of the dead man, and hurried below for assistance, saying nothing, however, of the immediate cause of the man's death.

The death of the judge delayed Jack and Don until the next day, when they proceeded to Lester with the remains.

Jack informed Marie by letter of what had occurred, so that she was prepared to meet her lover when he arrived with his sad burden.

Judge Rollins was buried quietly, and when Jack went to sea Marie remained with a relative in another town at some distance from Lester.

Jack and his gallant young crew set sail at the appointed time, and made a prosperous voyage of it, returning at the end of two years better, richer and happier than when they went away.

Upon their return Jack was married to Marie Rollins, Don Hall to Daisy Duncan, Dick Steere to Louise Girard, whom he had first known as Tony, the little cabin-boy of the Rover.

Soon after this Jack learned that Rabbett had been shot dead while attempting to escape from prison, and that Bones had died, Turk having been pardoned on condition of his leaving the country.

Word was heard soon after this of Towne, the fellow having been detected in some villainy and sent to prison for a long term of years.

Jack, Don and Dick are now captains of their own vessels, and are rich enough to retire from active life, while Syd, Phil, Nate, Walt and the rest all hold good positions, some with their old officers and some with other captains, though they all manage to meet now and then to talk over old times.

Next week's issue will contain "A BOY IN WALL STREET; OR, DICK HATCH, THE YOUNG BROKER."

SPECIAL NOTICE

Please give your newsdealer a standing order for your weekly copy of "PLUCK AND LUCK." The War Industries Board has asked all publishers to save waste. Newsdealers must, therefore, be informed if you intend to get a copy of this weekly every week, so they will know how many copies to order from us.

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HELP YOUR COUNTRY!

MAKING ARMOR FOR MODERN WARFARE.

Perhaps the strangest workshop in the United States is situated in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, where are being produced from pieces of ancient armor models to be adopted and copied for the use of soldiers of the United States Army. A famous French artisan is in charge of the show, which has been turned over to the Ordnance branch of the Army.

Helmets, shields, and breastplates will be made for our soldiers, inasmuch as the war in Europe has brought back into use many discarded weapons and practices of medieval times. Hand-to-hand fighting has caused the adoption of heavy breast-plates by the Germans and light breastplates by the English, while armored waistcoats are worn by the Italians. All the armies employ steel helmets and trench shields.

Fortunately, the Metropolitan Museum possesses one of the greatest collections of armor in the world. The workshop was established for the purpose of cleaning, repairing, and restoring the precious pieces assembled with great care from all parts of the world. It happened that included in the collection are 90 kinds of anvils and "stakes," several hundred hammers of different types, and curious shears and other instruments.

When the war began, the director of the museum, acting with the sanction of the trustees, placed the department of armor at the disposal of the Secretary of War. Since then many designs have been carefully worked out by Maj. Dean, former curator of the department of armor, who went to France to study needs last autumn and since then has been directing the adaptation of the models in accordance with suggestions made by Gen. Pershing.

Twenty-five types of armor have been made, so far, in the various factories, in lots varying from 100 to many thousand pieces. These armor defenses include arm and leg guards, which are considered most important, in view of the fact that hospital statistics in France and England show that 40 per cent of hospital casualties suffered were leg wounds and 33 per cent arm wounds.

HARDWARE CLERKS GOOD FARM HANDS.

Hardware dealers and clerks make good farm hands. This tip to the farmer in search of help is furnished by the farm division of the U. S. Employment Service. The man who works in a hardware store knows more about farm machinery, from a hoe to a tractor, than anybody else the farmer can get hold of if he has to hunt for unskilled labor. The hardware man generally has worked long hours. He is used to dirty hands and work clothes. He

probably has some muscle, because he is used to handling heavy things. If he is one of the millions of town and city men who grew up on a farm he already knows something about crops and stock. The most important thing to be done to make him a good farm hand, reports from different localities show, is to convince him that his country needs him on the farm as his war service.

STUDY AID TO SHELL-SHOCKED MEN.

Sixty-five young women are undertaking a unique means of proving their value to the country, by beginning a highly specialized type of war work that will eventually mean much to the labor power of the country. They are graduates of the Training School for Psychiatric Social Work at Smith College, Northampton, Mass., and are styled "shell-shock experts." They will go immediately to clinics in New York, Boston, and other cities to begin six months' practical work with nervous patients.

They will undertake the economic and physical reconstruction of shell-shock victims, with the idea of making these unfortunate men fit once more for places in industry. It is estimated that eventually 2,000 psychiatric aides can be used to advantage in this work. The Department of Labor is co-operating with the Federal Board for Vocational Education in the rehabilitation of disabled soldiers.

PLACING WORKERS ON FARMS.

The North Dakota State Council of Defense is solving two problems—the food problem and the unused farms in order to stimulate crop production in the Northwest.

The owners of the farms are paid a percentage of the return as rent. Large tracts in North Dakota were unused, and in order that the State might be made as productive as possible the Council of Defense decided to put them into service.

TEACHING GIRLS TO SELL TICKETS.

At the New York School of Instruction for Women Ticket Agents a two months' course of instruction is offered. Students are paid \$25 a month and when qualified for positions they command salaries ranging from \$75 to \$150 a month, according to efficiency. Applicants must be between the ages of 21 and 25 years, must have a high school education or its equivalent, and must agree to complete the course and to accept positions either in New York City or a nearby suburb. Applications may be sent to the Joint Committee on All Passenger Agencies in Official Classification Territory, 90 West Street, New York City.

CURRENT NEWS

WOMEN IN WEATHER OFFICE.

Following the resignation of the Assistant Weather Observer in Topeka, Kan., it was announced recently by S. D. Flora, State Meteorologist, that two young women, Miss Helen Claypool and Miss Alta Puett, had been employed to take charge of the work. This is the first time women have been employed as weather observers in Kansas, it is said.

HIDES EIGHT HOURS IN CASE.

Detective McIlhargy told in Morrisania Court, New York, the other morning of a ruse he employed to catch a thief. Having been assigned to solve the mystery of shoe thefts from a barn where cases of shoes awaiting shipment are stored, he secreted himself for eight hours on Saturday night in an empty case and was rewarded early Sunday morning, he alleged, by seeing William Christie open a case and extract two pairs of shoes. Christie was held for trial in the Court of Special Sessions.

THE STARVING GRAZE IN THE FIELDS LIKE CATTLE.

Horrible conditions due to starvation in Teheran and other Persian cities are pictured in a telegram to the Armenian Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief in this city from Mrs. Eva Balls Douglas, who has just arrived from Persia to Portland, Ore. Mrs. Douglas has returned to recuperate from typhus, of which her husband died while they were giving aid to refugees driven out by the Turks.

"In Teheran and other cities," her message read, "men, women and children are prostrated in the streets from exhaustion and are dying. In Hamadan the head and arms of two children remained to tell the story of bodies that were probably eaten after they died from starvation.

"Crowds gathered daily at slaughter houses with small vessels to collect blood as it flowed out of the trough. Others were grazing in the fields like cattle. Children came to our rest houses with flesh hanging on bones like rags, voices gone, but eyes imploring for a crust."

A CHANCE FOR THE BICYCLE.

Will the bicycle return to favor among persons above the golden age of seventeen? It has been out for a long time. Its disappearance was concomitant with the production in large number of the popular-priced automobile.

Interest in the vehicle itself will not bring the bicycle back. It is no more interesting now than a pair of familiar shoes. If the wheel returns to favor among grown-ups, it will be through that cause of so many advances and recrudescences, the war.

Motor-cars have advanced in price when a new generation was ready to buy. Many, but not all, of the prospective buyers will dig further into their pockets and possess the gas-wagons. Others will be deterred, not only by the cost of the car, but by the high prices of tires, gasoline, and repairs. The young married couple in the suburbs, paying for their home on the installment plan, may be forced to drop their ambition for a four-cylinder conveyance; yet they must get about somehow to make calls, to reach the beaches or the fishing-places. The bicycle will offer a temporary expedient.

Then there will be the man who is engaged on war work and his name is legion. He may live five miles from the new cantonment where he is making six or eight dollars a day as a carpenter or a mason. He may not incline toward the expense of a car. The big wages, he knows, are not permanent; a large part of them should be put aside. The bicycle is the solution of his transportation problem. Leg muscles do not cost twenty-six cents a gallon and bicycle tires, only two in number, are not twenty-five dollars apiece. A bicycle may be parked at the factory fence or on the home veranda.

The country roads are as well adapted to the cyclist as they were twenty years ago. So far as speed goes, they are better for him. Macadam highways lead in all directions. They are oiled and the bicyclist is not covered with dust by passing cars. There are also other roads, and here lies one of the reasons why the bicycle may return. These other roads are the untraveled ones where the motor-car does not go—the roads with single tracks, plunging into woods and leading to some strange place that the map-makers do not seem to care about. The motorist keeps off these roads. His heart may say yes to them, but his tires say no! You cannot get off a motor-car and trundle it up a rutty hill.

These are the pleasure roads of the cyclist now. In these mysterious lanes the wheelman is free from the dangers of the eighteen-foot highway. They take him to the pond of which the motorist never gets a glimpse. They lead him to farm-houses where milk is still to be had, a nickel for all he can drink. They bring him to cool shade, now not easily found along the main traveled roads.

The bicyclist, returning to the vehicle of his youth, finds much joy that is denied to the tourist who rides on crank-shafts instead of knees. He goes where he likes, and that the motorist cannot say. He will scorch along with his head down, trying to make a century, with a wet sponge in his mouth. He will use the bicycle for the sane purpose of getting somewhere in a way that is faster and easier than his legs would carry him, and at practically no cost.

FROM ALL POINTS

KHAKI BLOOMERS

From 800 to 1,000 women will be employed to help turn gun carriages and other war munitions at the Morgan Engineering Company, Alliance, O., it was announced recently. The women will wear khaki bloomers, work nine hours a day, and, after being properly trained, will receive the same pay as men. A physical examination is required. Shortage of man power has led to the step.

The work will include crane operators, material chasers, acetylene burner welders, rivet stickers, templet makers, lumber cutters, layer-out helpers, punch helpers, assemblers on gun carriages and for various clerical positions.

Relatives of men employed in the plant and dependents of soldiers in the service will receive the preference. The American Steel Foundries Company recently put on a number of woman as laborers in the yards.

REVIVAL OF POLO IN THE ARMY.

With Cavalry coming into its own once more in the war, polo is again becoming popular. At Camp Wheeler, Ga., it has been added to the list of athletics through the activities of the War Department's commission on training camp activities. When at the commencement of the war the Government dismounted a number of crack Cavalry regiments and distributed the personnel among Infantry and Artillery regiments interest in polo declined perceptibly. Hundreds of well-known polo players, many of them having international reputations, were affected by the order and sold their ponies. Now that cavalry is being used to so great an extent on the French front the mounted branch of the Service here feels confident that it will regain its former usefulness and importance in the American Army. In consequence, polo is reviving in the Army and also in civil athletics.

SUSPECTED OF USING SECRET CODE.

Investigation is being made to learn if there is any connection between the fondness which Joseph Wagner, who was arrested in New York recently, had for stamps and a code which might be used by Germans. Wagner, who came to the United States from Nuremberg in 1913, worked as a jewelry polisher at \$12 a week, and is said to have purchased in August \$49 worth of stamps such as are sold to collectors.

He had a naval manual which bore the name of the United States battleship Minnesota and a map of South America on which distances had been checked off. In the naval book the battleships of Brazil had been marked.

It is said Wagner received frequent folders in-

closing letters and signs which the officials are studying. His explanation of a folder bearing the letter "I" followed by a dash, a "P" and the word "love" was that he had become rusty in his music and was taking lessons by mail. Wagner was sent to Ludlow Street jail.

AUTO RACES RABBIT.

Junction City, Kan., motorists who frequent a long level north and south road some miles west of town tell of frequent races with a huge jack rabbit, which on occasion, gets up a speed of forty miles an hour. The jack's size would gain him recognition anywhere regardless of his speed.

All of the motorists tell of meeting him in about the same spot each evening. He jumps into the road ahead of the car and races for a distance of several blocks, then darts into the weeds beside the road and lets the car pass him. Races with rabbits in the evening are quite frequent; the headlights blind them and they stay in the road ahead of the car until they can see to escape to the side of the road, but this particular jack always meets the machines at a certain point and races with them until he reaches his jumping off place, so it is presumed that he races the autos by intention and not by accident.

Motorists tell of having three and four races with the same jack within a week.

NEW DRY DOCK AT QUEBEC.

The new dry dock at Quebec, Canada, now ready for use is one of the largest in the world, and will be of immense value at this time. The new dock, which has been constructed on the south side of the St. Lawrence, is 1,150 feet in length, 120 feet wide and has a depth over the sill of thirty-four feet, at neap tide and forty feet at high water of spring tide. The dock is divided into two compartments, an inner chamber 650 feet long and an outer one 500 feet in length. The outer entrance is closed by a rolling caisson, and the middle entrance by an ordinary floating or ship caisson. The outer section of the dock is filled through six culverts in the outer caisson, each having a sectional area of nine square feet, but there are two culverts of thirty feet section in each side wall. The middle entrance has a similar arrangement of culverts. For emptying the dock three main pumps of the horizontal centrifugal type, designed to deliver 63,000 gallons a minute, against a total head of twenty-five feet, have been provided, and two auxiliary pumps, each having a capacity of 6,000 gallons per minute, have been installed to deal with leakages and seepage. The pumping plant will empty the dock in about two and a half hours. Electric power is supplied by three direct-current 550-volt Curtis turbo-generators, having a total capacity of 2,550 kilowatts.

SENT ON THE ROAD

—OR—

A SMART BOY IN BUSINESS

By J. P. RICHARDS

(A serial story)

CHAPTER XX (Continued).

"Who gets the plums! Ha, ha, ha! Keep it up, boy. Shake the plum-tree. If you get tired of selling building blocks come to me, and I'll give you a chance to sell hams and sausages. But what's this?"

He opened another letter, and in tones still more thick and halting read:

"Chicago, ———.

"Dear Roy: I've got a piece of news for you. At the Sherman House here I fell in with a snide jewelry drummer named Floyd. And what do you think? He has given me a clew to your lost grip! Ah, ha, old pal! I know where that cash is. Floyd has put up a job to get it. We must give him the double-cross. I shall stick to him like a brother. We are coming to Minneapolis, and I shall tie up at the Bassford street crib, which you and I know so well. If we can catch our man, and the pipe is all laid, we shall run him out to your old saw-mill—see? He'll give up or he'll die—one of the two, and probably I shall have to settle Floyd at the same time, if not sooner, for he expects half, and don't get it. It's halves between you and me, old man. Look out for us any time, and then—well, enough said. The lake is deep, and I think we can dispense with brother Floyd. This is straight goods, Roy. Don't you show yourself around Minneapolis now unless you are a fool.

Yours as ever,

"Jake."

"Upon my word!" cried Tom. "Whoever would have thought that Jake Winzer was as bad as that."

"What's it all mean?" demanded Mr. Ford, thickly. "I'm kind of twisted. He's hitting at you, Walter? But this Floyd—"

"Hark! Somebody coming," breathed Walter.

He caught the sound of footsteps outside in the mill.

Mr. Ford whipped out his revolver.

"By heavens, if it's Roy Montfort he dies!" he roared, and with that he flung open the door.

"Hold on, sir!" cried Walter. "Remember what you said, that I was not to let you do murder to-night."

But Mr. Ford struck him aside.

Two men were seen coming through the saw-mill, one of whom carried a lantern.

One was Jake Winzer, the other Jack Floyd!

"That you, Montfort!" called the former.

Bang! Bang!

"Give me back my daughter; you scoundrel!" roared Mr. Ford, as he fired.

Probably he had not understood what was said.

Doubtless the mere mention of Montfort's name was enough to arouse his drunken ire, for he was certainly very drunk now.

Jack Floyd threw up his hands.

"I'm shot!" he yelled and keeled over.

Jake Winzer, with a smothered exclamation, took to his heels, and dropping the lantern, dashed off through the darkness, with Mr. Ford after him, yelling like a demon as he ran.

"Great Scott! Here's hot stuff!" gasped Tom.

"We must save him!" cried Walter. "Hump yourself, Tom! We are only interested in Ferdinand Ford to-night."

Away they flew, passing Floyd, who lay groaning on the floor near one of the big saw-tables.

Once in the open they saw a team standing at some distance away.

But Jake Winzer, instead of running toward it, was making for the logs in the lake.

Mr. Ford was gaining on him.

His drunk seemed to be all in his head, and not at all in his legs.

Twice he fired, but his aim was wild.

Winzer got out upon the logs.

The moon had now risen, and the boys could see a boat tied up at the end of the logs.

"Mr. Ford! Mr. Ford! Hold on, sir, for heaven sake!" Walter shouted.

But the millionaire paid no heed.

Winzer got out on the logs.

They bobbed about under his feet, but he seemed to know how to handle himself upon this unsteady footing, and ran on toward the boat.

Not so Mr. Ford.

As he jumped down upon the logs he instantly lost his footing.

The boys heard a splash and a cry for help.

At the same instant Hogg & Grabbit's drummer got into the boat.

He cut the rope, seized the oars, and pulled out upon the lake.

"That settles your friend, Walt!" gasped Tom. "He's a dead one, surest thing you know!"

CHAPTER XXI.

WALTER, TOM AND MR. FORD TAKE A FRESH START.

Walter and Tom Bagley now certainly found themselves with their hands full.

"This is a great piece of business!" cried Tom, when they reached the edge of the lake.

"Poor Ford is a goner I am afraid," replied Walter. "I can see nothing of him."

"He went down between the logs, all right. He was pretty drunk, I guess; he is drowned."

Meanwhile Jake Winzer was pulling up the lake at all possible speed.

(To be continued.)

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

GIRL POLICE MASCOT.

The Gloucester City, N. J., Police Department has a four-year-old girl that has been adopted as a mascot until her parents are found. The child was found wandering along Broadway, near the tollgate, and does not know where she lives, but says she came across on a big boat with her mother, and the Gloucester authorities believe her parents reside in Philadelphia. The child says that her name is Fannie. She has a lump over her left eye, and says that her father did it.

HAS FINGER AMPUTATED.

Giving up a little finger because of a deformity in order to join the United States marines had no fears for Sam Billingsley.

"What can I do to get in?" asked Billingsley when he was rejected here just before marine recruiting depots were ordered closed.

"Have that little finger amputated," the Sergeant told him.

"Well I'll go home and think it over," he replied. The Postmaster at Palestine wrote the local marine depot today that Billingsley had parted with his finger. Billingsley's papers will be the first filed upon resumption of marine recruiting, which is promised soon.

NAPOLEON'S COIN TRICK.

It is said that thousands of five franc pieces are split into halves by their French owners every year in the hope of discovering an immense hidden treasure. This treasure, according to the legend firmly believed, is an order to pay the holder one hundred thousand francs in silver five franc coins.

When Napoleon first set the five franc piece in circulation it was very difficult to induce a Frenchman to receive the new coin. Hence, according to the story, Napoleon gave it to be understood that he had ordered a check for one hundred thousand francs, written upon asbestos paper, to be concealed in one of the new silver pieces.

From that day to this no one has objected to the five franc piece.

TONS OF BERRIES CANNED.

Receipts of products at the cannery are passing all expectations in Cottage Grove, Ore. The high price paid for evergreen blackberries has resulted in the saving of tons of this crop that would otherwise have gone to waste. The high mark was reached this week with daily receipts of over four tons.

The unusual receipts this week have brought the average paid out daily for produce during the season up to close to \$300. Last month nearly \$3,000 was

paid for labor and produce. Upward of seventy-five people are now employed at the plant, and even with this crew much night work has to be done to keep up with the receipts.

NIGHT IN JAIL CHANGED MAN'S OPINION.

Albert R. White, a farmer, living in Rutland Township, Kan., forty-three years old and the father of eight children, refused to register Sept. 12, even though importuned to do so by his wife and children.

He is a member of the Holiness Church and claimed that the Lord had instructed him not to register, and that it was more necessary for him to obey the laws of God than it was man-made law. He was brought before the local draft board, and although assured by friends that he would probably be exempted on account of his large family and would not have to go to war, he still refused to register.

He was then turned over to the Sheriff, and after spending one night in the county jail he had another vision, which instructed him to obey the laws of his country.

YANKS EAT DOUGHNUTS BEFORE BIG BATTLE.

An American division commander, through the chief of staff, has written a long letter to the officials of the Young Men's Christian Association reading as follows:

"Particularly valuable were your services during the recent operation at St. Mihiel. You have furnished aid and comfort to the American soldiers in the last few days and in accomplishing this worthy mission you spared nothing."

Among these services the Y. M. C. A., emulating the Salvation Army, distributed before the attacks ten thousand doughnuts to one divisional organization. It supplied to each soldier before the attack four packages of cigarettes, two bars of chocolate, one package of matches and chewing tobacco without cost.

The organization distributed during the drive to wounded and men returning 17,000 packages of cigarettes, 4,000 packages of biscuits, 4,000 boxes of matches and 5,000 cigars. Half a million cigarettes and a quarter of a million cookies were distributed free among the troops when they were replaced by other soldiers.

David Martin, a Y. M. C. A. worker, of Pittsburgh, while advancing with his regiment, came upon a German kitchen with a quarter of beef and other supplies. He made the beef into hamburger steaks and served hot meals to hundreds of American soldiers.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 30, 1918.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

Scientists will try to unravel the mystery surrounding the unearthing of skeletons of eight unusually large men and dog by laborers of East St. Louis, Ill. The heads of the men were very large and each contained thirty-four teeth of extraordinary size. The dog's bones were found entwined in the arms of one of the skeletons. Bits of pottery nearby lead the authorities to believe that the men were Indians. Scientists will try to determine the period in which they lived.

A battle royal between a large dog and a turkey buzzard was staged in front of the W. Dickey home, near Brownstown, O., the other morning. The dog, lying in the yard, saw the buzzard circling above and began barking at it. Apparently angered, the huge bird swooped down into the road and attacked the dog, which ran out to meet it. The bird paid no attention to the several auto loads of people which stopped to watch the fight, but battled on with beak, wings and talons. Finally the bird delivered a knock-out blow with one of its wings and autoists rescued the dog.

In order to discourage and even punish careless work on aircraft, the following case might well be applied to others: At Tottenham Police Court on August 1st, William Benjamin Smith, of Tottenham, and James Harding, of Enfield (both in England), were summoned by the Ministry of Munitions for committing certain acts likely to endanger any person using an airplane. They were also summoned for doing certain acts calculated to deceive their employers as to the quality of certain material. It was stated that men were working on spars for Handley-Page machines, and Harding held a square while Smith drilled a hole in an airplane spar. The hole was cut a quarter of an inch out, and after discovering their error the defendants stuffed the hole with a plug, and made another hole in the right place. The effect was to reduce the strength of the

spar. A government inspector who detected the mistake asked Smith if he would like to ride on a flying machine containing such a spar, and Smith replied that he would not. Mr. Rowland Chessum, the proprietor of the factory, said he had repeatedly impressed on his workers the need of exactitude. When he was informed of the incident he called the work people together and again reminded them of the importance of their work. He also dismissed Smith and Harding. The defendants were fined. Now the moral of the story is that the workmen in aircraft factories hold the life of many airmen in their hands, and under no circumstances should they allow faulty work to pass on. If they do, then they are guilty of a very serious crime.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Little Henry—Are you going to marry my sister, Mr. Sapleigh? Sapleigh—I—aw—don't know, Harry. Little Harry—Then pa saw right. He said you didn't know anything.

Jim had made an unsuccessful attempt to conquer the world and came back to the Tennessee town dirty, worn out and hungry. "Uncle John," he said melodramatically, "I came home to die." "No, dod gast you," said unsympathetic Uncle John, "you came home to eat."

"Hello!" said the farmer, "what you swearin' about?" "Why," snapped the disgusted autoist, "this machine's broke down and I can't get it to go." "Cricky! you're in luck. The last fellow like you that I seen 'round here got all broke up 'cause he couldn't git his to stop."

"Well," said Mrs. Casey, proudly, "my Dennis was wan o' the pallbearers at the funeral o' the rich Michael Hooligan th' day." "Ah!" retorted Mrs. Cassidy, jealously, "'twas well fitted fur the job yer husband was; shure, he's used to carryin' the bier that some wan else pays fur."

The convicted man had just received his sentence and was being led out. "Poor man, is there anything I can do for you?" asked a sympathetic woman from the audience. "No, mum," said the prisoner, "unless you'd like to do this three years."

A negro was recently brought into a Virginia court on a charge of larceny. After hearing the evidence the judge pondered for a moment before passing sentence, and said: "Rastus, you are fined ten dollars." Whereupon the negro replied: "Boss, dat's a small skimption. Ah got dat ten dollars right down in mah left-hand vest pocket." "Well," continued the judge, "just dig down in your right-hand vest pocket and see if you can find thirty days."

PEARY'S BOY GUIDE

—OR—

ICEBOUND IN THE ARCTIC

By WILLIAM WADE

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XIX (Continued).

As the boat was rowed out to the ship May showed a revolver to Jack and said in surly, threatening tones:

"If yer tries any games on us I'm a-goin' ter shoot yer."

"I have no such design," quietly answered the boy.

In a short time they reached the ship, and Jerry fastened the painter of the boat to an accommodation ladder that hung down at the side and started to go up to the deck.

But just then Terry suddenly appeared, looking over the bulwark.

He aimed a rifle down at the rascal and shouted:

"Git back there, ye spalpeen, or, bedad, I'll dhrill ye!"

May was surprised, but he did not flinch.

He pushed the muzzle of his pistol against Jack's forehead and hissed in malevolent tones:

"Order that lubber back or I'll kill you."

Terry saw the boy's danger and heard the terrible threat.

"Shtop!" he roared in alarm. "Don't kill ther lad! I won't shoot!"

"Jerry, run up an' disarm that fool!"

"Submit, Terry!" cried Jack. "They have the upper hand!"

CHAPTER XX.

RUN ASHORE.

"Go up ther ladder!" exclaimed May, giving Jack a shove that almost hurled him overboard, after Jerry had followed Terry up and got the best of the young Irishman.

Jack obeyed the man, and when he reached the deck, with May close behind him, he saw that poor Terry laid on the deck with his arms bound behind him, while Crook was heading for the cabin.

As the villain flung open the cabin door there sounded a shriek, in the voice of Grace, and the next moment the girl rushed out on deck.

"Hold on there!" roared Jerry, grabbing her by the arm.

"Let me go!" gasped the frightened girl, struggling to get away.

"Yer a prisoner," retorted Crook.

"Not yet," she answered, defiantly, as she seized a belaying pin from a rack and confronted him. "If

you dare to lay a finger on me I'll hit you with this, you big scoundrel!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the rascal, derisively. "Look at the leetle spitfire, would yer, threatenin' me! Put it down, gal, or I'll——"

But that was as far as he got, for Jack had been infuriated by his attack upon the girl, and he now rushed at Crook.

"Stop thar!" May yelled at the boy.

"Go to thunder!" Jack answered, recklessly, as he kept on running.

Bang! went May's revolver, and a bullet whizzed past the boy's head; but he paid no heed to the shot, as he was determined to help Grace.

The ball flew so close to Crook that he yelled:

"Look out, Dan, or yer'll hit me!"

Just then Jack reached him.

"He may not hit you, but I shall!" he cried, and out shot his fist and, catching the rascal in the eye, it knocked him down.

Bump! went Jerry's head upon the deck, making him see more imaginary stars than he had ever witnessed before.

"Ouch!" he shouted.

May was now running after Jack, brandishing his revolver and shouting:

"Throw up yer hands thar, Buntline, if yer don't want ter git shot!"

The boy had reached Grace, for she rushed into his arms, and with one arm around her waist he turned to look at his enemy.

"Oh, Jack, I am so glad you came!" panted the girl. "Here, take this!"

She thrust the belaying-pin in his hand, and he grasped it and said:

"Don't be alarmed. I think I can lick these two scoundrels."

Just then May saw the weapon he held, and pausing, he raised his pistol to fire again at close quarters.

But as quick as a flash Jack hurled the belaying-pin at him, and it struck the man square in the face, causing him to reel back.

Terry had risen to his feet and now came running toward Jack and Grace at the top of his speed, shouting excitedly:

"Inter ther cabin wid yez! Thim Esquimaux in ther boat is a-comin' up ter ther deck, begorry, an' they'll soon be afther helpin' these villains. Hurry up! Shure an' we can't lick ther hull gang av thim!"

Jack now saw the dusky natives swarming over the bulwarks, and he seized Grace's hand, and they ran aft to the remains of the cabin.

A loud shout from the natives warned May and Crook that the three were getting themselves out of danger, but it was useless.

Once the three fugitives were within the cabin and had the door bolted there was no way for the villains to get at them.

"Is there anyone else aboard the Roosevelt?" Jack asked of Terry.

(To be continued.)

INTERESTING ARTICLES

WOMEN FREIGHT CLERKS.

Women are to be employed by the Toledo and Ohio Central Railway Company as clerks in the freight yards, Toledo, O., it has been announced. The women will start work at the rate of \$77 a month. The company officials assert they cannot secure young men capable of handling the work.

MAKES AIR MAIL RECORD:

Another record flight was made in the Aerial Mail Service by Pilot Maurice Newton, September 28. He reached Belmont Park from Washington in two hours elapsed time.

He left the national capital at 11:32 a. m. and reached Philadelphia at 12:45. Leaving Bustleton Station there at 12:58 he flew to Belmont Field, ninety miles, in 47 minutes, landing there at 1:45 p. m. He carried 200 pounds of mail.

CHINESE LETTER FOR SOLDIER.

Shortly after arriving in France, Lieut. Charles Crayton learned to write French. He felt enthusiastic over his acquirement, and, knowing his wife would not read it, he wrote her a letter in French. She had it interpreted. Mrs. Crayton then sought the aid of a Celestial who operates a hand laundry in Danville, Ill. For her the latter wrote a letter to Lieut. Crayton in Chinese, which he signed. Whether he succeeded in deciphering it remains a mystery.

TEACHER RIVETS SHIPS.

Less than six weeks ago Frank Johnson had a professorship in a high school in Philadelphia, Pa. He worked at it, too, and nothing else. To-day he has another job and so different is it in every respect from that professorship that one can scarcely realize the transition.

A riveter in the Merchant's shipyards at Harri-man! Yes, sirree! This man who never before did anything harder than lifting a textbook or balancing it before his class, now handles a steel riveting gun of great weight and you should see him crouched under a ship hull, holding that throbbing jumping machine against a red-hot rivet as the pneumatic does the driving. This is no classroom exercise.

Indeed, the classroom is only a memory to this shipworker. The pedagogue's boiled shirt has been replaced with a blue jumper and the bare neck tanned to the healthiest color, now shows where the white piccadilly used to be. Safety goggles have taken the place of the tortoise-shell glasses. Incidentally, Johnson says these changes in his makeup have come to stay. He has found a new life and it pleases him so much to be toiling with humanity for humanity's sake that he is perfectly content to keep on pointing that heavy riveting gun as long as his country needs him there.

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

The Great Wall of China is one of the architectural wonders of the world. It is the most formidable and vast structures ever planned by man. It is supposed to be a barrier for China, to defend her from enemies. It is from 15 to 30, or even 50 feet high, and is 15 feet wide at the top. The base is 25 feet thick.

It is built of an earthen core, faced with immense bricks that weigh from forty to sixty pounds each. These bricks are built upon a stone foundation, and in many places the wall is faced with granite. The earth-filled core has a pavement of bricks, laid in line on the top, that make a fine roadway.

The wall today is 10,000 miles in length, but it originally was much longer, stretching more than 15,000 miles, over mountains and down valleys of China. Its fortifications consist of parapets and fortress towers at frequent intervals. There are about 25,000 towers and about 20,000 of these are in fine repair after twenty-one centuries. This shows the thought and careful work that was put into the great undertaking, and it symbolize to all the people of today the desirable qualities in one's character of strength, perseverance, unity and true protection for man and beast.

Once seen, the Wall of China can never be forgotten. It is one of the best "Sermons in Stone" ever demonstrated. If you stand at Old North Gate, you can see the cloudcapped towers, extending on both sides, east and west, until the miles and miles of wall dwindle away into a minute point. And you stop to remember that for twenty centuries people have stood where you stand and have seen the same perspective view that you now see. Then you feel so small a bit of the Great Plan of Creation, and think to yourself, "What can I ever accomplish in view of this stupendous work?" Ah, this is the reply:

"You with the same Mind and Gifts from the Almighty, can work out wonderful things just as this Great Wall was thought and planned and manifested to last indefinitely. So don't belittle yourself, but remember you, too, are capable of great works, if you but handle the 'potter's clay' with the ability of an intelligent worker."

This awe-inspiring legacy of China's past greatness proves to us how fleeting are fame and greatness of the world. When this wall was built it was said that no power could ever reach the fortified and protected people back of it. And yet it was but a short span of years before an enemy found a way to attack the Chinese.

The Prince of Tsun, first Emperor of China, built the wall in the Third Century B. C., but the work was directed by a military officer named Ming Tien.

TRICK CIGARETTE BOX.

This one is a corker! Get a box right away, if you want to have a barrel of joy. Here's the secret: It looks like an ordinary red box of Turkish cigarettes. But it contains a trigger, under which you place a paper cap. Offer your friend a smoke and he raises the lid of the box. That explodes the cap, and if you are wise you will get out of sight with the box before he gets over thinking he was shot. Price 15c, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

MAGIC LINK PUZZLE.



A number of rings. The scheme is to link them together just exactly the same way magicians link their hoops. It looks dead easy. But we defy anybody to do it unless they know the secret. Price 10c by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE JOKE SPIKE.



This joke spike is an ordinary iron spike or very large nail, the same as is found in any carpenter's nail box. At the small end is a small steel needle, 1/2 inch in length, firmly set in spike. Take your friend's hat or coat and hang it on the wall by driving (with a hammer) the spike through it into the wall; the needle in spike will not injure the hat or garment,

neither will it show on wall or wood where it has been driven. The deception is perfect, as the spike appears to have been driven half-way through the hat or coat, which can be left hanging on the wall. Price, 10 cents, or 3 for 25 cents; by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE WAR FOUNTAIN PEN.



A very handsome fountain pen case to which is attached a pocket holder neatly made of metal and highly nickel-plated. When your friend desires the use of your pen and gets it, he is very much astonished when he removes the cap by the sudden and loud noise of the explosion that occurs, and yet a little paper cap does it all. Price 35c, by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickeled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 15c, by mail.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

A PECK OF TROUBLE.

7	5	3	
4	3	4	7
8	9	8	8
7	4	7	8

One of the hardest puzzles ever invented. Mix blocks well; then move squares without removing the box, so that every line of figures, up and down and across, and the two diagonals, will each add up 23. The Blank space may be left in either of the four corners.

Price 10 cts. each by mail, postpaid.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

ELECTRIC CIGAR CASE.



thought there were some cigars left in the case. A slight pressure on sides of case causes the cigars to disappear as if by magic. By touching a wire at bottom of case the cigars instantly appear again in their proper position in the case. As real tobacco is used they are sure to deceive any one. It is one of the best practical jokes of the season. A novelty with which you can have lots of fun.

Price 35 cents, sent by parcel post, postpaid.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., New York.

This handsome cigar case appears to be filled with fine cigars. If your friend smokes ask him to have a cigar with you. As he reaches out for one the cigars, like a flash, instantly disappear into the case entirely out of sight, greatly to his surprise and astonishment. You can beg his pardon and state you thought there were some cigars left in the case. A slight pressure on sides of case causes the cigars to disappear as if by magic. By touching a wire at bottom of case the cigars instantly appear again in their proper position in the case. As real tobacco is used they are sure to deceive any one. It is one of the best practical jokes of the season. A novelty with which you can have lots of fun.

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CLARKE COIN CO., Box 35, Le Roy, N. Y.

POCKET SAVINGS BANK.

A perfect little bank, handsomely nickel plated. Holds just five dollars (50 dimes). It cannot be opened until the bank is full, when it can be readily emptied and refilled, ready to be again refilled. Every parent should see that their children have a small savings bank, as the early habit of saving their dimes is of the greatest importance. Habits formed in early life are seldom forgotten in later years. Price of this little bank, 15c, mailed, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE FRIGHTFUL RATTLESNAKE!



To all appearances it is a harmless piece of coiled paper with a mouthpiece attachment, but upon placing it to one's mouth, and blowing into the tube, an imitation snake over two feet in length springs out of the roll like a flash of lightning, producing a whistling, fluttering sound that would frighten a wild Indian. We guarantee our rattlesnake not to bite, but would not advise you to play the joke on timid women or delicate children. Each snake packed in a box. Price, 10c; 3 for 25; mailed, postpaid.

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DIAMOND SQUIRT RING.



A handsome Gift ring set with a brilliant, a close imitation of a diamond. Connected with the ring is a small rubber ball filled with water, which is concealed in the palm of your hand. As your friend is admiring the stone in your ring, a gentle pressure on the ball will throw a small stream of water into his face. The ball can be

instantly filled by immersing it in water, when you are ready for your next victim. The ball is entirely hidden in the palm of your hand, and only the ring is seen.

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SINCE QUITTING

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A THREE DAYS' VICTORY

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